

But cost is \$8,000 more than budgeted

Council okays cash for leash-free zone

CYNTHIA GAMBLE
Staff Writer

There were several barks of approval when council okayed funding for the new leash-free zone in Cedarvale Park, but there were a few growls at the higher than expected cost.

The official opening of the zone is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 24—Dog Day in the Park 2006, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The day raises awareness of dog care, socialization, and benefits of leash-free zones.

Staff reported that tenders to fence the less-than-an-acre sized plot of land between Silver Creek and the Halton Region Water Treatment Plant for the zone, came in \$8,000 over the projected \$18,000 budget.

The tender was awarded to D.F. 2000 Fence Inc. of Mississauga for \$24,662.20, after staff made several revisions to the design to lower costs.

The original budget was \$18,000, with \$3,000 being raised by local dog owners group, HH-Dog.

Ward 2 Councillor Bryan Lewis questioned the over-expenditure, and Director of Recreation and Parks Terry Alyman said it's a result of capital budgets being prepared a year in advance and then updated product

pricing occurring at tender time. The supplier indicated to him that the cost of fencing has gone up, he said.

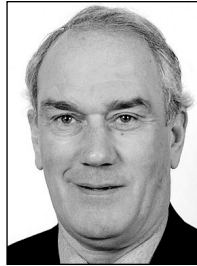
While the Town will now chip in the extra \$8,000 from the Capital Financing Reserve Fund, council motioned for HH-Dog and staff to pursue sponsorships to recoup that amount.

HH-Dog also helped to fund the very popular leash-free zone in Acton's Prospect Park.

Kathy Dorbeck, a HH-Dog member, reported to council last week, that her group has raised the requisite \$3,000 plus another \$500 and will now strive to raise at least another \$2,000. HH-Dog also agreed to continue to find sponsors to offset the entire \$8,000. HH-Dog volunteers will continue to provide the monitoring and upkeep of the leash-free zone as it does in Acton.

Dorbeck said the Acton zone, open since 2003, has been well used by the community.

"Halton Hills has become noted by



BRYAN LEWIS

North American retired racing greyhound organizations as the only park in North America that recognizes the need of ex-racers to have their own private off-leash time," said Dorbeck. "As a result, Prospect Park is the place where greyhound groups come from as far away as Hamilton, Milton, Oshawa and Kitchener to run. I should note that greyhound owners have been very good about taking out memberships and that they do pay a higher fee."

Dorbeck noted there has been a long-standing conflict between Cedarvale Park users and dog owners who don't have a readily available location to socialize their pets off-leash. Both HH-Dog and the Town's bylaw enforcement department have been looking forward to the Georgetown zone to alleviate that situation.

As a result of the zone being approved for Cedarvale, Dorbeck said, HH-Dog has experienced an increase in membership, attendance at monthly meetings and offers to become volunteer monitors of the zone.

There are about 5,000 dogs licensed in Halton Hills.

For more details go to hhdog.com (Cynthia Gamble can be reached at cgamble@independentfreepress.com)

Town, school board renew pool agreement

Halton Hills council passed a resolution at a recent meeting to renew its agreement with the Halton District School Board for use of the indoor pools for another five years beginning January 2007. Continued use of the pools in Georgetown District High School and McKenzie-Smith Bennett School is necessary for the Town's swimming programs.

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Thursday Worship - 10:00 am

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