

Lake residents get say on plans for parks

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

If you're a Musselman's Lake area resident, you'll soon have your say on what kind of park facilities you need.

Whitchurch-Stouffville council agreed Tuesday to a lake park study. The first meeting inviting residents to give their input will likely be held this spring. Interviews will also be held with neighbourhood associations. In the 2006 budget, \$20,000 was earmarked for the study.

The study could have the added benefit of bringing sometimes adversarial area residents' associations together, Mayor Wayne Emmerson said.

One idea for residents to consider at the meetings is having the town pay for memberships to Cedar Beach Park.

Local Councillor Phil Bannon has been in talks with Janet Davies, co-owner of the private park, and town staff regarding this proposal. The \$35 annual fee would allow daily access to the beach for seven months. At the same time, the town could monitor how many people use the park.

"It provides services for the residents at the lake and it is the best recreational service they could ever have," Mr. Bannon said.

Residents will also be asked where other parks should be

located.

Currently, there is only one public park that has access to the lake, at the foot of Churchill Avenue on Ninth Line. Cedar Beach Park has leased the land to the town for \$1 per year for 10 years.

However, the park is little used, Ms. Davies said.

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Other parks in the area, all in Ballantrae, are Ballantrae Park next to Ballantrae Public School, Felcher Park, and a parkette in the new Savoia subdivision west of Hwy. 48 near Aurora Road.

"I made a commitment two years ago that I would provide (residents) with park services," Mr. Bannon said. "I am going to do that."

Having a new public park, paid for by taxpayers dollars, is very costly, Ms. Davies said.

"We have to ensure that whatever park privileges we provide for the residents are enjoyed by the residents of the lake and aren't a draw for people in other municipalities," Mr. Bannon said.

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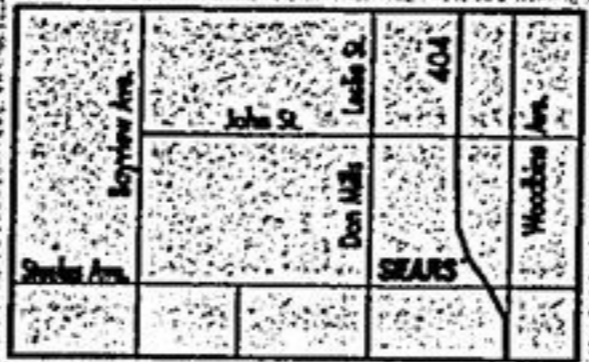
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