

Deadline extended for purchase of lake park property

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The town is ready to cut a cheque for \$2 to obtain the James Coultice Estate in Musselman's Lake and turn a portion of it into a park.

But the estate has been delayed in determining the value of the approximately 155 acres, which needs to be reported to Revenue Canada for tax receipt purposes, according to Dave Cash, CAO for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The sale was supposed to be completed last fall, according to Mr. Cash, but the deadline has been extended to this September.

"It's progressing. It's a complicated deal," Mr. Cash said. "I don't think anybody's been dragging their feet. It's been difficult to get information on it because it's not a typical deal."

Mr. Cash said even if the sale took place as planned, only the demolition of the buildings on the property and road work would have been done this year.

The town plans on only developing a five-acre portion of the property into a park, which is off Ninth Line southeast of the lake, with the rest going to the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

"We have proposed a simple transfer to (the authority) for a similar nominal sum. Details have not yet been finalized," Mr. Cash said.

Once the town gains ownership of the land, known as Wagon Wheel Ranch, it will begin public consultations on the park. Mr.

Cash hopes that will take place this fall. Once a plan is in place, council will have to approve funding.

Last year, it was estimated that it will cost about \$42,500 in legal, survey and closing fees to complete the purchase. The demolition of the driveway works/extension was estimated at \$200,000 and it is expected to take another \$940,000 to fully develop the park, according to Andrew McNeely, director of planning and building services for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

York Region

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