



Corporation of the Township of Brock

Staff Report to the Mayor and Members of Council

From:	Beaverton Harbour Advisory Committee (BHAC)
Position:	Advisory Committee of Council
Title / Subject:	Recommendations and Budget Considerations for the Beaverton Harbour
Date of Report:	November 3, 2021
Date of Meeting:	December 6, 2021
Report No:	

1.0 Issue / Origin

The Harbour Advisory Committee was formed at request of Council

As per the BHAC Terms of Reference:

Purpose

The Beaverton Harbour Advisory Committee (BHAC) is an advisory Committee of Council, established to complete a review of the Beaverton Harbour and provide input and recommendations to Council on different projects.

Mandate

2.1 With staff support the committee will review the Beaverton SkyWoman proposal and provide a formal recommendation to Council prior to December 31, 2020.

2.2 With staff support the committee will review the Beaverton Harbour and Thorah Island Harbour and provide a formal plan with recommendations to Council prior to December 31, 2021. In doing so the committee will review and consider the following:

- Previous studies completed at the Beaverton Harbour including the 1997 & 2018 studies;
- Existing practices;
- The Beaverton Harbour ReWilding project;
- The Beaverton Harbour public survey completed in fall of 2019;

- Daytime and overnight parking at the Harbour; and
- Ensure the public and community organizations are consulted during the review.

The committee has held a number of meetings throughout 2021 and would like to present the following information for Council's consideration.

The committee wishes to note that the Terms of Referenced noted that December 31, 2020 was not a reasonable timeline, and may have been a typo, therefore the committee worked towards a final reporting deadline of December 31, 2021.

2.0 Background

As per the terms of reference the BHAC reviewed

- 1997 Harbour Study
- Harbour Study Questionnaire – 2019
- Current parking practices
- Ownership of lands in and around the harbour
- Boathouse lease terms

The Committee provided recommendations on Skywoman/gifted public art which were endorsed by the Committee of Whole on June 14, 2021 and ratified by Council on June 28, 2021 (attached as Appendix 1 to this report)

The Committee developed the Beaverton Goal and Objectives which were endorsed by the Committee of Whole on June 14, 2021 and ratified by Council on June 28, 2021 (Attached as Appendix 2 to this report.) The approved Goal and Objectives were forwarded the Official Plan Review Team for incorporation into the final document.

3.0 Analysis

The Beaverton Harbour and the adjacent parkland and recreation facilities are a valuable but underutilized asset and resource to the residents of Brock. Historically, the harbour was associated primarily with recreational pursuits of fishing and boating, offering one of the few publicly accessible launch and docking facility on the eastern side of Lake Simcoe. Municipal population growth, and the expansion of recreational assets such as the splash pad, accessible playground and kayak launch have resulted in greater use by residents and visitors. Once a well-kept secret, the harbour is being recognized for its value as a natural recreational asset and its potential as an economic driver for the municipality. The review committee strongly supports the following recommendations that, when implemented, can maximize the potential of the harbour for the betterment of the whole of Brock. Opportunities exist to expand the revenue potential from several aspects of the harbour for example upgraded lease agreements, new commercial opportunities, parking fees etc., allowing for reinvestment into enhancements and maintenance.

The quality and safety of the water in the mouth of the Beaver River and the beach area continues to be a source of frustration for residents and visitors. Strategies to address this issue are critical components of a successful long term harbour plan. Introduce the topic of clean and safe water

Small communities throughout Ontario are recognizing the value of natural amenities such as harbours and are leading reinvestment initiatives to maximize this potential. In Brock Township, the municipality and the residents have fallen short in taking full advantage of the tremendous economic, environmental, and social potential that Beaverton Harbour offers. Development of a community vision through consultation and the implementation process that follows takes time. An ongoing commitment of leadership and finances by Council are required to successfully build and land a long term Beaverton Harbour Master Plan.

A comprehensive plan for reinvestment through a Harbour Master Plan and the associated annual and reserve budget allocations will send a clear and strong message to the federal government underlining our position through the divestiture negotiations.

Recommendation 1) Harbour Acquisition

The committee recommends the aggressive pursuit of finalizing the divestiture of the harbour property from the federal government to the Township of Brock with a completion date during the next term of Council (2022-2026). Negotiations should include provisions for breakwall improvements and repairs, and the inclusion of features that lead to a safe and secure harbour for residential and visiting watercraft boaters.

This decision needs to be addressed prior to the finalization of a Harbour Master Plan.

Recommendation 2) Creation of Harbour Master Plan

1. That staff be directed to research the cost of consulting services to create a Harbour Master Plan
2. Funds be budgeted in the 2022 budget year for the creation of a Harbour Master Plan which would be adopted into the Official Plan.
3. Funds be budgeted over 3-5 years beginning in 2022 for the implementation of actions arising from the Harbour Master Plan
4. Harbour is a Municipal Asset and requires funds to be budgeted in dedicated line items (capital and operating) on an annual basis for the maintenance and continuous improvement of the Beaverton Harbour and associated parkland and facilities, including funding for staff who would assume responsibility for the maintenance and development of the Beaverton and the Thorah Harbours.
5. Township staff to actively seek and apply for appropriate grants/funding partnerships to reinvest into the Harbour.
6. The Harbour Master Plan to consider (but not limited to) the following including:
 - Strong public consultation, communication and participation of non-profit, service groups, boathouse lease holders, indigenous groups, accessibility advisory committee
 - An environmentally sustainable focus, building on the naturalization efforts in the adjacent park and exploring potential environmentally friendly approaches to lighting and energy requirements.
 - Water quality improvement techniques and measures for the river and beach area

- The opportunity for economic development new investment and revenue sources from rentals, enhanced services, leases etc.
- Identify potential opportunities for new uses if that area of land was vacant (all Township lands / if boathouses are no longer there)
- Additional and improved docking facilities to attract and accommodate current and new transient users (overnight and longer term) that could include access to power, Wi-Fi, and hookup to water and pumping facilities.
- Land acquisition and sharing of regional lands for joint use in the harbour area
- Improved or reconfigured roadways and parking for residents and visitors
 - i. address the entrance and one-way vehicular traffic to harbour area
 - ii. address parking situation, lower lot parking, upper ball diamond parking and winter parking for ice fishing
- Improved people spaces: maximize pedestrian space and pathways and increase accessibility for upper to lower park areas, seating areas and sheltered facilities
- Location and size of year-round washroom facilities that could include changeroom, indoor/outdoor shower facilities and water re-fill station.
- Inclusion and consideration of public art, and local cultural and historical concepts, including possible locations for donated work of art (see previous recommendation)
- Activities for all seasons

Recommendation 3) Boathouses

Provide notice to current lease holders of municipal lands in the harbour area of the Harbour Master Plan process and the potential for changes to the use and management of municipal lands.

Encourage boathouse owners to provide input to the community consultation process.

Commitment to investigate the opportunity for redevelopment of the boathouse area

Council must proactively review and consider changes to the term of the leases and financial obligations in anticipation of lease expiration. Consideration should be given to shorter lease terms, with an increased cost, and for those funds to be redirected to harbour improvement projects.

Recommendation 4) Community Gardens

The community gardens continue to be offered for use by the Beaverton Horticultural Society until such time that the final Harbour Master Plan is completed and any changes to that area be required.

Recommendation 5) Short Term Goals

That Council to generate interest around the harbour revamping through the approval of 2022 budget to address the following Short Term Goals. It is important to create a specific budget line item for the Beaverton/Thorah Harbour to address ongoing maintenance and small projects.

- Repurpose wooden structures (ReWilding)
- Fixing paving stones
- Maintenance of existing boat ramps - addition of signage for launching procedures (possibility of numbered ticketing system)
- Designated short term boat parking space beside ramps for boat launching and short term parking spaces for vehicles to load and unload
- Improved traffic flow and signage: allow for left hand turn directly into upper lot, relocate present traffic blocking poles at the initial Harbour entrance area to just west of the Baseball Parking Lot entrance and signage directing vehicles northward/down to the Launch Ramps/Restaurant/Playground area or westward to the Baseball Parking Lot. This would eliminate the unnecessary extra vehicle/trailer circulation through the lower parking/launch. and is less costly than relocating the present Baseball Parking Lot entrance driveway

Example:

BOAT LAUNCH, RESTAURANT, PLAYGROUND, PIER

(with bold arrow pointing right/northward)

BASEBALL AREA PARKING LOT, TURN LEFT AHEAD

Westerly Sign at Relocated Traffic Blocking Poles:

BASEBALL AREA PARKING LOT; NO HARBOUR VEHICLE ACCESS

(with bold arrow pointing left/southward)

- Investigate and install best option bird deterrent measures at both the South and North Beaches in the Harbour area to reduce Seagull and Canada Goose use of the beach areas to reduce e coli-causing bird droppings, thus improving beach water quality
- Better placement of improved portable washrooms (by pumping station)
- Work with the Tourism Advisory and Economic Development Advisory Committees to considering drawing people to the harbour for weekend events like craft sales or a farmer's market, canoe rentals etc.
- Connect downtown core to the harbour with available bike rentals
- Investigation of painted pathway from harbour to downtown core
- Revamp entrance of Railway station at top of hill and utilize space to advertise walking distances and destinations (retail, restaurants, historical)
- Walkway improvement – designated sidewalk area on south side of pavement from parking lot to the entrance at west side of splash pad
- Support initiatives through the accessibility committee to ensure the harbour is accessible to all.
- Beach and Harbour Area cleanliness
 - o Better management of garbage (purchase of new garbage bins i.e. Lions Club bins, increased frequency of pickup)

4.0 Related Policies / Procedures

Township of Brock Official Plan and current Official Plan Review

1997 Harbour Study

5.0 Financial / Budget Assessment

Staff to prepare an RFP to determine budget scope of an all-encompassing Harbour Master Plan
Throughout the HMP process and implementation it is imperative that all available opportunities for cost sharing – other levels of government and

6.0 Climate Change Impacts

Lake Simcoe water levels, flooding, ice damage

7.0 Communications

Key stakeholders to be consulted throughout the creation of a Harbour Master Plan. These groups should include

- Service clubs and non-profit organizations
- LSRCA
- Durham Region
- Provincial and Federal Government

Public Information Centres be held (similar to the Official Plan Review) and that notice of the project and opportunities for engagement be publicized through the Township website, social media, monthly newsletter and bi-weekly newspaper advertisements.

8.0 Conclusion

The Beaverton Harbour has endless opportunities to be redeveloped and improved to benefit residents of Brock Township and attract visitors.

9.0 Recommendation

(This section will be the motion passed by Council)

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Report Number XXXX be received, and
THAT