

From: Steve Anker
Sent: Tuesday, July 11, 2023 11:21 AM
To: Clerks Richmondhill <clerks@richmondhill.ca>
Subject: Re: July 12 , 2023 Council Meeting agenda Item 15.2.3 - Community Pickleball Hub Planning.

From Resident
Steve Anker
75 Belvedere Crescent
Richmond Hill, Ontario
L4C8V3

On Jul 11, 2023, at 11:13, Steve Anker wrote:

Regarding the agenda of Pickleball DDO lands.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Steve Anker
Date: July 11, 2023 at 11:06:28 EDT
To: officemayor@richmondhill.ca
Subject: Pickleball needs a HOME

Hello Mr. Mayor

I have been following this issue for sometime. I have submitted previous depositions on how Pickleball has improved my life here in Richmond Hill, and the need to respond to Pickleballs explosive growth. The previous counsel wanted to delay, and numerous persons expressed the need to get started building if supply was going to keep up with demand. We thought we would finally see shovels in the ground.

Here we are again with delay, delay delay. As you know, Pickleball is growing at a phenomenal pace. As it exists now, players scramble to meet up with each other, all over Richmond Hill, Vaughan, Markham, Aurora, and Newmarket. This is not serving Richmond Hill residents.

If you have ever tried to book an indoor time slot at the community centres, for Pickleball, you would understand just how much the Town is not meeting the needs of Pickleball players. Every Monday at 8 AM it's time to book your session for the following week. At 8 o'clock and five seconds, if you don't have your first slot booked, you get none of them. Imagine how many residents are sitting at their computers at 7:59:59 waiting to click. Whoever has the faster Internet wins.

Pickleball players are avid because it Improves their lives. I have spoken with people who have lost their spouse and were lost until they discovered Pickleball and the sense of community and friendship it provides, not to mention the health benefits.

I heard the staff report regarding the DDO lands and was quite impressed with how well

balanced and thoughtful the planning was. The location is in the centre of Richmond Hill and easily accessible to transit - what a great location! The negative comments that I heard from various persons seemed to be a real stretch. The deer I often see grazing 100 feet from Bayview Avenue in the middle of rush-hour don't seem to be concerned with sound. In the panhandle, the planned location is an open field just behind the hockey arena. It is not in the middle of the park disturbing the tranquility. It is the entry point to the park. So what will it be - just more parking spaces if the courts are not there? It seems more like nimbism than any real concern.

As a resident, my only real concerns would be parking on residential streets, noise and lighting. All these things were evaluated and addressed in the staff report!

In the recent council meeting it was discussed to take a pause to give the proposal a fresh look - fine. Now it looks like Council is going to delay - the justification being that there are more Pickleball courts now. Yes there are and that's great. It still does not address the concerns that the sport of Pickleball deserves a home? Do we tell hockey players to go play on outdoor rinks scattered all over the community? Pickleball needs a location where all can come together to enjoy and advance the sport. It has changed the lives of so many people in physical fitness and socialization.

Yes, Richmond Hill has added more pickleball courts and made some tennis courts dual purpose. As far as I'm concerned, all your local tennis courts should be converted to dual purpose. Many times I have been playing at a dual purpose court with no tennis players whatsoever. The single use tennis court is often being used for football volleyball or empty. While the tennis court sits empty Pickleball players wait for their turn. So by all means let's increase the number of local pickleball courts. Make courts all dual purpose.

The local courts are located to serve the needs of those residents in that area. They should not be drawing in people from all over town creating on street parking issues for local residents. In fact, I think we would better serve residents to have an established location of multiple courts with parking. I have tried playing at the Kings College pickle ball court. Street parking is a major issue for the residents in that area, and the courts are so busy waits of 30 minutes or more between matches is normal.

Local small courts do not address the needs of creating an environment where all lovers of the sport can come together in the spirit of community to further their love of the sport.

In fact I think the town needs to seriously address the need for more indoor court resources as well. When the weather no longer accommodates outdoor play that demand surges indoors. It's like 8 lanes of the 401 narrowing to two.

Please build a facility for the large group of resident Pickleball enthusiasts. It is time to provide not talk, especially after studies have already been completed. Many existing local courts have no proper facilities e.g. washrooms or places to rest.

The sport crosses all genders, age groups, and nationalities. It is a positive power of community and health. And it is becoming a serious sport.

Pickleball brings people together. Now we need a place to gather!

Thank you,

Steve Anker
Resident