

**NOTES OF THE PARKS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION  
SESSION / PRESENTATION HELD MARCH 12, 2007 AT 7:00 P.M.  
At the LATCHFORD TOWN OFFICE COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**PRESENT:**

**Council:** Mayor Peter Davies, Councillor Larry Anderson, Councillor Mac Hamilton, Councillor Gordon Lomax, Councillor Mike Cole, Councillor Maxine Cannon, Councillor Jim Bennett

**Guests:** John Salo, Ontario Parks, M.N.R.; Rick Calhoun, M.N.R., North Bay District; Linda Coté, South Temiskaming Community Futures and representing FedNor; Mark Vincent, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines; Anne-Marie LeRoy, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines; Gord Tokaryk, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing; Vicky Muir, Nastawgan Trails; Warren Schaffer, Professor, School of Natural Resources, Northern College; Andrew Healy

**Regrets:** Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources and M.P.P.; Denise Deschamps, FedNor; Jerry Spooner, FedNor; Anthony Rota, M.P.; Laurier Gadoury, Ministry of Culture; Paul Bewick, Manager, Northeast Region, Ontario Parks; Adair Ireland-Smith, Managing Director, Ontario Parks; Peter McLean, Executive Regional Director, Northern College; Michael Hill, President, Northern College; David Himmelman, Dean, Business, Communication Arts, and Hospitality, Canadore College; David de Jourdan, Coordinator, Recreation and Leisure Services, Canadore College; Larry Wiwchar, Volunteer; Shawn Sadler, Canoe and Kayak Instructor, Owner of Taiga Endeavors; Martha McSherry, Ministry of Health Promotion; Les Wilcox, President, Nastawgan Trails Inc.

**Staff:** Betty Gibson, Clerk-Treasurer

*Mayor Davies welcomed everyone to this Information Session / Presentation and introductions were made.*

**1. OVERVIEW OF PARKS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: Councillor Gord Lomax**

Councillor Lomax noted that encouraged by the outcome of the Ministry of Northern Development & Mines Tourism Demand Workshop in 2005, he made a proposal to Latchford Town Council. Council arranged for Gord Lomax to present it to David Ramsay and Anne-Marie LeRoy. Ms. LeRoy convened a meeting of experts on December 14, 2005 who concluded that the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines should organize a Highway 11 corridor meeting of tourism interests and that Councillor Lomax should consult widely to produce a Business Case for Municipal and Ontario Government approval. All this brainstorming resulted, last spring, in a plan to open WJB Greenwood Provincial Park, to develop the Dam Rapids Water Park and develop a fully serviced campground beside the Town's Waterfront; and also resulted in an update meeting with David Ramsay on October 20, 2006. The development project "LATCHFORD INTEGRATED PARKS DEVELOPMENT" (LIPD) was born. Greenwood Park will anchor the project, act as the main highway 11 trailhead for a huge network of trails, will complement the other corridor sites by featuring near wilderness hike-in and canoe-in camp sites. The Dam Rapids will draw the target market (i.e. the hikers, cyclists, canoe trippers, play boaters) to stay and play. Inner City Water Park growth in the United States is helping to revitalize 60 downtowns, according to Rapid Magazine. This development project will make the fifth in Canada. Latchford's downtown site will feature a comfort station, water and electrical hook-ups for the visitors and tourists who want the adventure but also the amenities that the other two venues do not provide. Latchford's logging, mining and cultural heritage, recreation and retail facilities will also be promoted. Councillor Lomax noted that Ben Greenwood was the 1<sup>st</sup> Chief of Parks; and Jim Keenan, a native son of Latchford followed Ben Greenwood and was

promoted to Deputy Minister of Recreation and Tourism. Temagami District's extensive visitor attractions and services will naturally benefit from LIPD. The Town's goal is to start development July 14, 2007 on Latchford's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Councillor Lomax emphasized that LIPD promotes wellness, provides a living laboratory for student studies, sustains the natural environment and heritage, and last but not least will provide badly needed economic development in our district. In fact we are looking at 153 person years of employment, 61 direct and 92 indirect from project start to 2013.

## **2. SPECIFICS AND OBJECTIVES:**

### **GREENWOOD PARK: Councillor Gord Lomax**

Councillor Lomax quoted "Congratulations to all those responsible for finally getting the WJB Greenwood Provincial Park into reality. It is a great idea too long in the coming", wrote Gerry Killan, UWO History Professor and the Author of "Protected Places, A History of Ontario's Provincial Parks System" emailed last week.

We are following the Ontario Park's policies and procedures first developed by Jim Keenan. Council has approved the Terms of Reference, Background Document and Preliminary Park Management Plan and handed it over last month for Ontario Parks' approval before a public open house and comment period can commence.

Ontario Parks will provide the Park Entrance Sign to be located at the intersection of Highway 11 and Anima Nipissing Road 3 kms south of Sgt Aubrey Cosens VC Memorial Bridge, to be in place for the July 14 Sod Turning Ceremony, which will signify the start of park development. Ceremony Invitations have been dispatched.

Phase 1 development will take place in 2007 and 2008 to be ready for camping in 2009. The work includes building 2 park roads terminating in parking lots. Currently an old ranger camp is at one terminus and people camp there every summer. That site will be developed into a day use site with a beach, a dock, a picnic shelter, dry toilets, change rooms, etc. The other terminus is located at the mouth of Gilchrist Creek where Burns Trail crosses it. Besides dry toilets, it will have a large tripper's staging area, trail access, future group campground nearby, etc. Mini parking areas will be scattered at entrances to a multitude of hiking trails servicing 24 isolated camp sites throughout the park, many of which will be along the park's 8 kms of shoreline on Bay Lake providing boat access.

A cluster of 8 walk-in campsites with a dry toilet will be developed around an abandoned gravel pit accessible from Anima Nipissing Road. Navigation, interpretive, and safety signage will be placed for the convenience of visitors. A welcoming kiosk with parking will be built at the park entrance, displaying maps, instructions, things to do, solar driven videos promotions, bulletin board for up coming events, suggestion box, garbage bag and stoop and scoop bag dispensers, bear proof trash and recycling containers, etc. Permits will be sold at the Latchford Information Centre and the Dam Depot. The permit system will be managed using the honour system. Estimated development job creation: 34 person years. About 50% of this work will be "in-kind" provided by volunteers from local hiking clubs such as Nastawgan Trails Inc and Project Canoe, students from Northern College Natural Resources School (Haileybury Campus), and Northern College Graphic Arts School (Kirkland Lake Campus), Canadore College Eco-Tourism School in North Bay, local friends of park, Town Forman and his staff and equipment, make use of old growth pine windfalls from Finlayson Provincial Park, Town General Administration and supplies, Training and Town liability insurance for on site volunteers approved by Council.

Phase 2, between 2009 and 2013, will add 24 campsites and promote them to the same target market, add group camping, access roads, parking lots, signs, dry toilets, a Town Water spigot piped under Bay Lake, a warm-up cabin for winter cross country skiing and snow shoeing. Estimated development job creation: 13 person years. About 39% of this work will be in-kind as in phase 1 above with new volunteers being added all the time.

**WATER PARK: Councillor Mike Cole**

Councillor Cole provided a summary of the project. The area along the river below the dam will be rebuilt and sculpted to provide a white water park for canoeists and kayakers. A walkway will be constructed beside the rapids under the bridges connecting the road across the Dam for user safety (avoid crossing the road and tracks as well as for emergency vehicle passage over the Dam in the event of an accident on the bridge). This walkway and road over the Dam will provide safe passage, convenience; aesthetic appeal for all seasons, for Water Park and other users including snowmobiles (will extend the season considerably). Councillor Cole met with the Ministry of Transportation to explain the project and acquire the permits to undertake the project on their land around the Veterans Park, bridge and highway. Similar consultations have been requested of ONR regarding their property around the railway bridge, of Public Works Canada regarding the Dam and other property owners such as MNR, Oceans and Fisheries Canada. The Town will be working with partners on this project and a volunteer design team is getting started as is a volunteer promotions team. The resulting Water Park will be one of only 5 so far in Canada and 60 so far in the USA according to Rapid Magazine. Students are playing a big part in this development too. Estimated development job creation: 10 person years.

**WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT: Councillor Mac Hamilton**

Councillor Hamilton stated the importance of bringing tourism to Latchford and in fact the District, and noted that this combined project would do this.

The Waterfront Development will encourage travellers and those utilizing the parks to come into Latchford to visit the beautiful waterfront and walk along the boardwalk (accommodating wheelchair). A comfort station will be built across from the Community Recreation Centre. Those visitors stopping at the Comfort Station for a much needed shower, etc. will likely purchase items from the local stores and gas station, etc.

Councillor Hamilton showed a drawing of the proposed walkway, which will be located on high land and not wet land. The walkway will circle around to the “shortest bridge”; there will be a couple of additional short walkways, for a total of approximately 750 yards of walkway. Lights will be installed along the walkway and in the Comfort Station. The water/sewer lines are already adjacent to this area for connection.

This portion of the project will result in 4 equivalent jobs during the project period.

A letter has been sent to the Department of Oceans and Fisheries and Public Works Canada to confirm any required procedures.

**3. PARKS DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS: Councillor Mac Hamilton**

The total Park / Waterfront Development will result in 61 person year jobs for 2007; 92 indirect; with 153 jobs spread over the full project. This project is also an educational tool for students from Northern College and Canadore College, as noted in Councillor Lomax’s overview.

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**4. PROJECT COSTING, IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION,**

*Handouts; Included in the Agenda handout is a breakdown of Full Time Equivalent Direct Development Jobs and Indirect Jobs that will be created, as well as a breakdown of Developments Costs matched by the extensive In-kind contributions by phase and by year. These were presented and explained by Mac Hamilton.*

**CO-OPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS: Councillors Mac Hamilton and Gord Lomax**

A Project Development cost and In-Kind Summary were distributed to all attendees. Final analysis was that funding sources to provide 60% of the cost and Latchford to supply 40% of the cost.

Councillor Hamilton noted the following letters of support, resolutions, meetings, support groups, etc.:

- Northern College, Natural Resource Class, Haileybury Campus (P. McLean, Executive Director)
- Northern College, President, Timmins (Mike Hill)
- Canadore College, North Bay (Barbara Taylor, President)
- Article – make use of resources in our district
- Development Ideas – Latchford Five Year Objective
- Council resolution authorizing councillors to proceed with the project
- Council resolution authorizing advance of \$20,000 to begin first phase
- Council resolution authorizing funding applications
- Meeting with Coleman Township; receptive to the project
- Press Release sent to media, Ministries and other organizations
- Latchford Area Trails Brochure (now in third reprint)
- Updating Latchford Brochure (first print of 2,000 copies exhausted and 4,000 copies are to be reprinted)
- Meeting with Dave Ramsay (October 2006)
- Article in the North Bay Nugget
- Website designed by students from Northern College, Kirkland Lake campus; a CD will be provided
- Request For Proposal advertised for a facilitator for the Parks/Waterfront Project; an applicant was chosen but has not yet been notified
- Park Scale Models made by Northern College Students from Haileybury Campus last fall
- Local volunteers produced the approved Business Case and Park Management Plans
- Local volunteers are engaged in designing the Dam Rapids Water Park
- Canadore College students are developing a Parks Marketing Plan
- Nastawgan Trails have established their only Highway 11 Ottawa Temiskaming Highland Trailhead in Latchford. as well as published a new book and map to promote district trails
- ORCA are supporting the Water Park project
- Ontario Parks hire a summer student to do Greenwood Park Inventory last summer
- Students digital photos (over 200) of the parks were flashed during the meeting

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**5. COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, SUGGESTIONS:**

Following is a summary of various comments, suggestions, etc:

- Ms. Muir suggested a walkway over the bridge and across the dam; also a pedestrian cross walk for those individuals coming into town. It was noted that a walkway across the highway bridge already exists, and Council will look into a walkway across the dam and a crosswalk.
- It was noted that one set of docks will be lower for easy access by canoeists and kayakers. Judged to be a good idea.
- Plans include handicapped requirements. Judged to be a good idea.
- Rapids Design Team is organized with five volunteers.
- Promotion Team (local volunteers and Canadore College students) is in place.
- Councillor Cole has initiated a Canadore College competition to design a Water Park logo and is working on marketing.
- Mark Vincent suggested a DVD with pictures and music to be sent out to all outfitters who could play it in their stores. Council will engage students on this good idea.
- Ms. LeRoy advised to look at all sources of funding for other similar Northern projects; suggested we breakdown the costs into shorter time frames and in finer detail when

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submitting applications to funding partners; Funding organization all work independently.

- It was also noted that NOHFC has funded Waterfront Improvement Projects in the past; John Salo will confirm NOHFC participation in French River Visitors Centre.
- Community Infrastructure Program looks to smaller communities with innovative ideas – call Laurier Gadoury.
- Councillor Hamilton reiterated that the project is not just for Latchford, but for ALL area. It was noted that there are over 6,000 vehicles per day passing through Latchford on the Trans Canada Highway 11, as per M.T.O. Traffic Study 2003.
- The project must have government support to be successful; John Salo will send a letter to Council stating Ontario Parks support and a letter from Mark Vincent and David Ramsay will be sought by Council
- Councillor Lomax reminded those present that it is a Provincial Park and not a Latchford park; it is something Latchford is endeavouring to do for Northeastern Ontario not just for the benefit of Latchford.
- Councillor Lomax noted that Council has advertised and is in the process of engaging one of seven applicants as Consultant/Facilitator to champion LIPD also Council is looking for Funding Agencies to match the Municipalities financial commitments– reiterated again that the project will benefit all Northeastern Ontario.
- Mark Vincent and John Salo advised that the north has received funds for water front parks such as The French River Provincial Park Visitors Centre.
- All the many natural attractions for campers, hikers, etc. were noted.
- There has been much government discussion on conservation and preservation, and therefore council expects substantially support will be forthcoming. This is a project to preserve and enhance a natural part of Northern Ontario for future generations.
- Town / volunteers have committed to 40% of costs; the Town is only asking for 60%. The Town suggested a government committee be set up to help prepare the funding applications and coordinate a cooperative financial plan to help Latchford with this very important project.
- The Facilitator will be a prime person to see this project through to the end. Councillor Hamilton feels that if Ontario Parks were to manage this park this person would be hired by Ontario Parks and work on the project for Ontario Parks and would coordinate all public meetings for what Council believes is creating another Park Legacy for generations to come.. In any case, the Facilitator will interface with NOHFC, probably our main funding partner.
- The Town representatives must sit down with a cooperative government to proceed with this project. It was emphasized that other municipalities have not provided 40% as the Town of Latchford has committed.
- Ms. LeRoy suggested the Community Development Program and noted that the breakdown costs are important; it is important to have the best possible application and also look at other projects that have been successful. Council agreed.
- Mark Vincent suggested checking into other Park Projects. John Salo committed to do that.
- The Ministries present also emphasized the importance of obtaining letters of support from David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources and Ontario Parks.
- The Ministry noted the project is phased over 6 years and advised that NOHFC will only look at 3 year projects and not beyond; may have an easier sell if it is three years – perhaps in two three year phases. Council committed to follow this advice.
- It was also advised that municipal type infrastructure funding might be applicable for some parts of the project.
- Separate the trails & campsite work in Greenwood Park and show that the Municipality will cover those costs.
- Show the project as a different type of project i.e. trail head and Water Park; different type of tourist attraction; bring more people from U.S.A., Europe etc.
- Councillor Hamilton reiterated that it is not just a Latchford project – there are volunteers from North Bay, Kirkland Lake, Temiskaming Shores; much bigger than just Latchford.
- The Ministry of Northern Development and Mines was asked if there could be a cooperation development committee made up of Council, the Clerk and the Ministry to sit down and complete this park development for Northeastern Ontario.
- A meeting must be set up with David Ramsay, MPP.

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- Ms. LeRoy advised that if NOHFC did consider it they would be setting a precedent and also noted that all applications go to the members of the Board and the decision is up to the Board. Ms. LeRoy emphasized that all they can do is to assist the proponents with the applications.
- It was noted that the best way to proceed was with an application for funding for “Waterfront Development and Fun Park”. It was noted that there is 8 miles of shoreline along the northeast boundary of WJB Greenwood Provincial Park.
- The French River visitor Centre was funded by NOHFC.
- The Waterfront Improvement in Sault Ste. Marie was funded by NOHFC and also Penn Park in Marathon.

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Mayor Davies thanked all present for attending.