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Getting ready for a town hall at 1 Carden Street. The topic: turning Guelph's various sports groups into a coalition. Shall we tweet?



Cllr Gibson, who organised this meeting, welcomes everyone, and throws it to Parks Manager General Matthews. The first topic is the Parks & Rec Master Plan, and staff is presently in the middle of phase four on this one.

The process for the P&RMP began in 2019, and there's also a Parks Master Plan ongoing, which will include a sports field strategy. That strategy will look at what we have, what we need, and where there needs to be improvements.

It's going to take a year to get just this piece of it right, Matthews says. That's why it's not part of the P&RMP because it's just such a massive piece of the parks puzzle.

fyi: the Park Plan was approved last February.

Gibson says a role for the potential sports council might be to look at how they might advocate for some of these challenges and accelerate them. Not necessarily through municipal government action, but by finding other partners.


Gibson is asked if the intention of the sports council is aimed to represent youth. Gibson says the big part of this will be about youth, but it's clear that there's a desire for something like this at all ages and skill levels.

Mayr Guthrie asks if there will be direct outreach to various sports groups about the fields strategy. Matthews says yes, they will be reaching out to stakeholders, and the council may be *a* conduit. This will start in Q1 of 2024.

Danna Evans, GM of Recreation and Programming, takes over to talk about the South End Community Centre progress. She starts with the basics: location and specs.

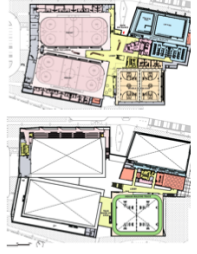
South End Campus

- Part of an overall campus that includes Bishop Macdonnell Catholic High School
- Amenities include:
 - Dragonfly Playground and Splashpad
 - Larry Pearson Ball Diamonds
 - Tennis Courts
 - Basketball Courts
 - Trails
 - Sports Field
 - Picnic Shelter



Facility Amenities

- Twin ice pads
- Lap and teaching pool
- Double gymnasium
- Walking track
- Multi-purpose rooms
- Meets the City's energy goals of Net Zero Carbon



The plan will come to council for final approval this coming Tuesday, and then there will be some final design work and a groundbreaking later this year.

Evans says once things with the SECC will settle they will look at other amenities in the City's rec amenities. Gibson notes that this how a council might be key because people like the ones gathered here will surely have thoughts about what will happen to other facilities.

One of the participants points out that the pool at the SECC is still too small to host competitions. Evans notes that planning goes back to 2001 and it's been revised 4/5 times. The main goal was to address growing pop. need in Guelph.

Evans is asked about the depth of the pool, but she doesn't know. Presently, the only pool in Guelph deep enough for diving or water polo is Victor Davis pool at the Vic Road Rec Centre.

Apparently, the depth is 25m and there might be eight lanes, which is something that did come up in the facility needs assessment. This according to DCAO Colleen Clack-Bush who oversees parks & rec.

Gibson says this is another thing that the council could bring, the perspective of sports tourism. When debate the MAT last year, sports tourism didn't really come up, and it's actually a big piece of the local tourism picture.

One of the people here makes the point that ice is a big issue in Guelph, some of the play at the Power Play tournament had to be shoved off to Fergus because of the lack of rink space (and hotel rooms).

On that Evans says this is all part of the final design process, which, again, is happening right now.

Will there be access to the diamond & facilities on the site? The goal is to keep access to open as building is happening, some of that will have to be determined in progress.

Is there room for expansion? Evans says no is the short answer. How about other rinks like Centennial, half-ice is handy for ringettes, which is the sport this person represents.

A rep from basketball says that we could probably be here all night talking about details about the SECC. Gibson agrees and says there's some larger issues to discuss too. Evans says they will use the contact info from tonight to reach out.

Chris from Guelph Hockey asks about year-round ice facilities. Evans suggests having a conversation offline about that.

Justin from Guelph Soccer asks about the last time a needs assessment was done. Evans says 2014 and acknowledges that a lot has happened since that time.

That's the end of the staff presentation, we're now going to talk about the matter of formally organising.

A question is asked about making the rinks accessible for in-line hockey. Evans says that's possible, but the floor might be too shining. We get into a discussion about tiles and how that could be beneficial to other types of sports too.

Who all's here?

Royal City Badminton

Rep from UGDSB

Seniors Badminton

Royal City Artistic Swimming

Guelph Giants

Gryphons Hockey

UofG Dept. of Athletics

Guelph Minor Hockey

Guelph Youth Basketball Association.

As each group is introduced they're talking about their concerns, and the big thing everyone has in common is that there's no enough space.

Also, there's a lot of praise for U of G athletic facilities, which are filling the gaps left by the City. Also, Ringettes are being pressed to hold tournaments but they can't because they can't block off hotel rooms. (These tournaments attract 3,500 people.)

Who else?

Guelph Ringettes

Guelph Kings Hockey

Guelph Minor Lacrosse

Guelph Youth Volleyball

Guelph Soccer

Guelph Minor Softball

Guelph Minor Football

Guelph Pickleball Association

Guelph Minor Baseball (which is 85% full *hint*)

One person notes that Oakville has 18 ice pads versus 8 in Guelph; they only have about 65,000 more people than us. A rep from Guelph Soccer asks about creating the possibility of create a year-round indoor pitch, not a dome, but a structure.

Also:

Royal City Aquatics

Guelph Storm

Squash Canada

Guelph Disc Golf

Guelph Girls Minor Hockey

Girls Minor Softball

Guelph Lacrosse

The rep from Royal City Aquatics made the point that no one's talking about a new outdoor pool, especially something about 50m long for professional competition.

CAO Scott Stewart notes that the SECC is \$117 million and that's "not chump change". It was \$135 million a year ago. And we're facing a situation when there's going to be less DCs for these kinds of projects. A unified council makes a difference with these sorts of projects.

Gibson says that when council approved a pause the SECC the project a year ago, no one came out to say 'no' but it would have been interesting to have people come out and ask that it not fall off the radar.

Gibson also notes that when the new library comes to council, the gallery is packed. He's not throwing shade, he's just pointing out that advocacy makes a difference.

Councillor O'Rourke encourages everyone to get in early on these things to make sure their voices are heard.

Clack-Bush points out something she said at CoW this month, that the SECC is important to free up ice at the Sleeman Centre so that the City can chase new tourism opportunities.

Gibson is now going to hand out three questions that the players here will discuss in small groups:

- 1) What should the immediate goal of the executive be?
- 2) What should leadership of the council look like?
- 3) What kind of funding should there be

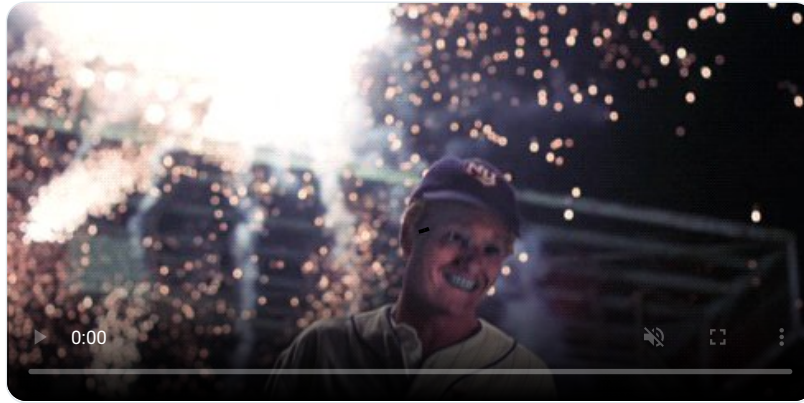
Winding up, Gibson asks for the groups to hand in their answers to the questions he had. Thanks staff for doing some overtime. In the next couple of weeks he hopes to put together an executive summary that will be made available to everyone.

In a month, Gibson will seek to put together a search committee to put an executive for this council together.

The guy from Ringettes says its important to keep the momentum moving. Gibson adds that with PIN shutting down the whole thing about the free background checks is not going to get sorted out this year, but the council is looking at bringing it back in next budget.

The Ringettes guy says he doesn't want the message to be that they just came here to b*tch. Staff is great and they are appreciated.

That's a wrap for tonight!



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