



Municipality of Port Hope

Staff Report

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Report Title: PHAI Industrial Site Remediation: Lions Park and Chemetron Lagoon

Report to: Works & Engineering Committee

Date of meeting: April 18, 2023

Report Author:

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Department responsible:

Office of the CAO

Report Number: WE-09-23

Recommendation:

That a resolution be presented to Council to direct staff to continue to work with Atomic Energy Canada Limited (AECL) and Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) to finalize and implement the Restoration Plan for both Lions Park and Chemetron Lagoon.

Highlights:

- The Municipality of Port Hope (MPH) negotiated the remediation of known industrial waste sites as part of the PHAI project, saving local taxpayers upwards of \$100M in remediation costs and resolving environmental issues.
- Remediation is rapidly advancing at industrial sites and is at different site-specific stages.
- Lions Recreation Centre Park (“Lions Park”) and Chemetron Lagoon restoration design concepts are now available.

Background:

As part of the 2001 legal agreement between MPH and Canada, in addition to the cleanup of Low Level Radioactive Waste (LLRW) MPH also successfully negotiated the environmental cleanup of known industrial waste sites, paid for by Canada, in return for hosting the long-term waste management site.

This element of the agreement is significant as it saves taxpayers of Port Hope upwards of \$100 million in remediation costs and removes highly toxic material from our community when accounting for all industrial sites identified. It also provides for the opportunity to improve these sites for the future use and enjoyment by our community.

It is important to distinguish the difference between industrial waste and low level radioactive waste. LLRW sites typically contain exactly that, low level radioactive waste from the former Eldorado facility. The industrial sites identified in the PHAI cleanup are

much more toxic and include the presence of lead, heavy metals, PCB's and other dangerous waste and originate from other businesses. The PHAI project originated to remove LLRW and the municipality successfully negotiated the inclusion of unrelated industrial waste sites. Lions Park and the Chemetron Lagoon are 2 of the industrial sites being cleaned up under the agreement.

Discussion:

Lions Park - This site was successfully negotiated into the agreement because of the known presence of high levels of industrial waste such as lead, boron, barium and zinc, in most cases at levels more than 100 times provincial limits. Lions Park was used as an industrial waste dump. In 2021 Council supported the recommendation of both CNL and municipal staff to remove and replace the trees to allow the waste to be properly removed and the site to be restored and enhanced.

Since that decision, cleanup efforts are progressing, and a restoration concept plan has been prepared. As promised, and clearly communicated throughout the process, the proposed plan greatly enhances the space benefiting both the environment and the community. Through a strong relationship between AECL, CNL and MPH, and following early feedback from the adjacent neighbours and the Parks Recreation and Culture (PRC) Advisory Committee, the proposed plan is attached (**Attachment 1**).

The Lions Park site will be, as originally promised, a healthy woodlot free of invasive species and in a state to be safely maintained going forward. Proposed additional enhancements include an accessible pathway, benches made from timber reclaimed from the site, a gazebo, gardens, and other features. Tree species will be native to this region and reflective of requests from the immediate neighbours where possible.

It is anticipated that the restoration phase will follow the waste removal phase with restoration scheduled to begin in fall 2023. The existing ball diamond space is outside of the PHAI remediation zone and plans for that space are being developed by the PRC Advisory Committee. The result of the remediated space will be a safer, healthier and environmentally improved community asset at no cost to Municipality of Port Hope taxpayers. It also removes municipal long-term liability. The project removes future financial liability of about \$25 million from the taxpayers of Port Hope and reduces environmental risk. The tree canopy will be restored and will survive through proper maintenance which was not possible prior to remediation.

Chemetron Lagoon – This site was successfully negotiated for cleanup due to the known presence of industrial waste. The pond area adjacent to Lake Ontario contains heavy metals and PCB's and has been fenced off for many years. Removal of waste, which must be shipped to Quebec to be incinerated, is underway.

The proposed restoration concept plan (**Attachment 2**) opens the space up to the community for the first time with new accessible trails, an additional lookout over Sculthorpe Marsh, a shade structure and seating, and the planting of meadow grasses and flowers. This low maintenance approach supports climate change principles. The existing parking lot location is moved slightly to the north to make the traffic sight lines safer. The project removes future financial liability of about \$30 million to \$40 million

from the taxpayers of Port Hope and reduces environmental risk to the surrounding area.

Financial Considerations:

The cleanup of the Lions Park and Chemetron Lagoon by AECL / CNL removes future financial liability risk of approximately \$55 million from the local taxpayer.

Communication and Public Engagement:

The Lions Park restoration concept plan has been shared with the immediate neighbors. Both the Lions Park and Chemetron Lagoon concept plans will be shared with the PRC Advisory Committee and the Environmental Advisory Committee. Signage at both locations is planned onsite to keep the community informed of the restoration progress.

In addition, the plans will be posted and advertised on myporthope.ca to gather public feedback on the concepts. The feedback received will be considered as one component of the final detailed design development process.

Conclusion:

These two known industrial waste sites will be greatly enhanced, and future environmental and financial liability will be significantly reduced. Staying on the original path of industrial waste site cleanup is critical to our community.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Lions Landscape Restoration Concept Plan

Attachment 2 - Chemetron Lagoon Landscape Restoration Concept Plan