

Council updated on plans for Town Hall Campus

By Nick Fernandes

Caledon Town Hall in Caledon East is bound for an expansion, as plans for the Caledon Civic Campus were discussed before council last week.

The newest update on the developing project called a few sensitive elements to the Council's attention that will need to be addressed. The Caledon Civic Campus is meant to be an extension to the growth Caledon is experiencing as a community. The Campus will incorporate the unused land around Town Hall to create a community space that will stretch from Town Hall, to the Caledon Community Complex and Community Park.

The plan also intends to use land on the other side of a stream behind Town Hall to build a larger park. The Campus is expected to include a splash pad, a skateboard park, trail extensions, expansions to the town hall and other facilities, and the widening of Old Church Road to accommodate more traffic.

But there have been concerns raised by council about the project to move the old Caledon East Orange Hall. It was standing on the Caledon East United Church property, but was dismantled earlier this year, with the idea of reassembling it on the Town Hall campus.

"I've got a bad feeling in my gut about this thing," said Councillor Allan Thompson about the financial issues surrounding the lodge. Built in 1856, the timber structure is one of three remaining outposts of the fraternal Orange Order in Caledon and represents a significantly influential element in Ontario history.

The proposal is to have the Lodge moved to the Campus site for meeting functions. But the cost of the project is proving to be a concern for the council. Estimates on the cost of the movement, rebuilding, and upgrades was estimated to be up to \$450,000. While this is cheaper than the earlier estimate of \$900,000 the council still questioned the reasoning behind the cost.

"Thompson and I could put that thing up in a hurry," said Councillor Gord McClure. "It's a shed."

There has also been some discussion about the plans for a skate park, concerns that the noise from skateboards might disturb or intimidate other people frequenting the campus. That would include younger children and senior citizens.

"I do not think that is what you want during a wedding," Mayor Marolyn Morrison said, "and it's not the view you want when looking into the hall."

Morrison and other members of council asked Town planners to consider moving the park to an alternative location, while still keeping in mind the need for it to be visible to the community.

Other important issues to be resolved with the project include the need to retain sufficient parking, controversy with the decision to build a new emergency services buildings, and how much more space is needed in the planned extensions to the Town offices.