

Fountainhead Park Clubhouse

Date:	October 24, 2008
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	Brenda Patterson, General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 8 - York West
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update the Community Development and Recreation Committee on the closure of the Fountainhead Community Centre, including the Centre's activities over the course of the last five years, the reasons why the Centre was closed, and plans for its future use. Staff are recommending that the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse continue to be used for much needed storage space.

In 2004/05 the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse was renovated and some community groups were given access through a former Councillor's office, contrary to the new harmonized permit policy. Upon investigation of this matter, the building was closed.

Parks Forestry and Recreation has determined that the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse will continue to be permitted as a tennis clubhouse and much needed storage space.

On a go forward basis, the Parks Forestry and Recreation Division now has substantial internal controls to prevent use of its facilities that does not adhere to approved policies. The permitting function has been reorganized such that all permitting is controlled centrally, under one policy and procedure, eliminating most "legacy arrangements".

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that Parks Forestry and Recreation manage the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse in accordance with the harmonized permit policy and all other applicable policies.

Financial Impact

This report will have no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of September 12, 2008, the Community Development and Recreation Committee requested that the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation report to the November 17, 2008, meeting of the Community Development and Recreation Committee on the closure of the Fountainhead Community Centre, such report to include a list of the Centre's activities over the course of the last five years, the reasons why the Centre was closed, and plans for its future use.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/cd/minutes/2008-09-12-cd18-mn.pdf>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In the past, North York Council had a Reserve Fund of approximately \$500,000, a percentage of which was allocated for specific ward projects. In 2002 a former Councillor requested that the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse be renovated, using approximately \$50,000, from the Reserve Fund.

In 2004/05 renovations were completed whereby the ice rink change rooms and the ice rink compressor room were converted to offices and meeting spaces. Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff provided keys and cleaning supplies to the former Councillor's staff for community groups requesting to use the space. No permitting system was established at the time.

In November 2006, Parks Forestry and Recreation received an inquiry regarding the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse permit and lease holders. Management staff investigated and discovered that various activities were occurring in the building, without adherence to the new harmonized permit policy or lease agreements. The activities included:

- After-school programs
- Workshops and community programs for the South Asian community
- Community services for the Vietnamese community
- Refurbishing old computers for distribution to the community
- Paralegal services and other political activity

In December 2006, Parks Forestry and Recreation closed the building and the office of the Auditor General was contacted for assistance in investigating the situation. It took several months to identify and contact the community groups and individuals using the facility, and in June 2007 the groups were asked to remove their equipment and supplies.

Parks Forestry and Recreation staff have since contacted Legal for advice on how to manage the remaining files of the groups and individuals that have been secured and documented.

COMMENTS

The original purpose of the building was to be a clubhouse for the tennis club. Parks Forestry and Recreation has applied the new harmonized permit policy protocol to the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse and currently there is one permit that has been issued to the Fountainhead Tennis Club. This use will continue in the future.

The portion of the building that was renovated, and is not permitted by the tennis club, is not suitable for office or community space. Neither a sprinkler system, nor fire alarm was installed in the renovated rooms. In addition, there is no caretaking staff on site to maintain the building and washrooms.

Parks Forestry and Recreation will use the non-permitted space in the Fountainhead Park Clubhouse for much needed storage space. Should changes be made to the building to make it conducive for public use, then the future usage will adhere to Parks Forestry and Recreation policies.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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