Parks Development – Improvements to Richardson Beach

Engagement Summary

Open houses: Oct. 24, 2017, and Feb. 7 and May 23, 2018

Get Involved Kingston online surveys: Nov. 2 to 24, 2017 and Feb. 17 to March 17, 2018

Three public sessions were held with the community to reach a consolidated design that would be attractive and provide safe, accessible water access at Richardson Beach.

First public session: The first public meeting on Oct. 24, 2017, gave an overview of the project as conceptualized in the Waterfront Master Plan and outlined some of the technical site challenges to be considered as part of the design. An online survey through the Get Involved platform in November 2017 asked the community to comment on what elements and functions they envisioned for the site and what improvements they would like to have included in the improved shoreline/beach area.

Heard: Separate functions for different users.

Separating functions (for swimmers, joggers, walkers, windsurfers and small-craft use) and the safe and accessible access to the water were critical to the public.

Second public session: With feedback from the initial public meeting and survey, Thinc Design presented two new concepts for the project at the second public meeting on Feb. 7, 2018. These two concepts were also presented to First Nations/Metis/Indigenous stakeholders on Feb. 2, 2018. The two concept options were very similar except Option 1 included a wide sidewalk link immediately south of the bathhouse across the existing grass lawn while Option 2 did not have this feature. The other difference was the main accessible walkway led to the larger eastern beach in Option 2 and to the smaller western beach in Option 1. The two concepts were subject to a lot of scrutiny at the session. Preferences for Options 1 and 2 were noted using the second survey on the Get Involved platform in Feb/March 2018.

Preferred option offers access to eastern beach for users of all abilities

Option 2 was the preferred option (49 per cent to 30.6 per cent) primarily based on a desire for accessible access to the eastern beach and retention of the large grassed area east of the bathhouse. Other features on both plans were similar: the outlook just west for the bathhouse including transfer platform to the water; ceremonial plaza west of the outlook; the integration of wooden loungers into the terraced platforms south of the building, making the rear door of the bathhouse accessible via a ramp and the recharging of beach pebbles.
Third public session: Based on feedback at the Feb. 7 meeting and from the online survey in February and March, a preferred consolidated design was drawn up by Thinc Design and presented at an open house on May 23, 2018. This plan was very similar to Option 2 and featured an accessible walkway to the larger eastern beach as well as an accessible ramp to the western beach; large slab seating with wooden loungers integrated into the platforms; an extended lookout just west of the bathhouse; a set of accessible transfer steps into the water and a celebration plaza (water ceremonies/other).

Multiple user-groups approve design

Swimmers, windsurfers and casual park users at the meeting liked the overall design and the functionality of the spaces that would allow multiple user-groups to coexist on the site without conflict. The consultant will work with City staff and outside agencies to have this plan refined and developed into technical working drawings.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act-version of the panels from the open house is on the City’s project web page.

In accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11, accessibility feedback related to the proposed improvements was received by Kristine Hebert.

Summary of feedback collected:

The final concept for the park was well received.

- Residents, swimmers, windsurfers and casual park users were happy with the separation and design of the spaces.

Next steps:

Summer 2018 – Preparation of construction documents

- Fall 2018 – permits and approvals from technical agencies
- Spring 2019 – tender-ready documents prepared, approvals and permits from outside agencies
- Summer 2020 – construction, subject to budget approval