

3. STONEBRIDGE COMMUNITY LEVY VOTE

VOTE SUR UNE PRÉLÈVEMENT À STONEBRIDGE

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That Council approve a community-wide ballot to determine support for an area specific levy in order to purchase 198 acres of golf course lands located in the Stonebridge Community.

RECOMMANDATION DU COMITÉ

Que le Conseil approuve la tenue d'un vote, à l'échelle de la collectivité, pour déterminer si les résidents sont favorables ou non à un prélèvement propre au secteur afin d'acquérir un terrain de golf de 198 acres dans la collectivité de Stonebridge.

DOCUMENTATION/DOCUMENTATION

1. Councillors report, dated 20 September 2019 (ACS2019-OCC-GEN-0007).

Rapport des conseillers, daté le 20 septembre 2019 (ACS2019-OCC-GEN-0007).

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Finance and Economic Development Committee / Comité sur les débentures
October 1, 2019 / 1er octobre 2019**

**and Council / et au Conseil
October 9, 2019 / 9 octobre 2019**

**Submitted on September 20, 2019
Soumis le 20 septembre 2019**

**Submitted by
Soumis par:**

**Councillor Jan Harder, Barrhaven (3), Councillor Scott Moffatt, Rideau-
Goulbourn (21) and Councillor Carol Anne Meehan, Gloucester South
Nepean (22)**

Contact Person

Personne ressource:

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Ward: Wards Barrhaven (3), Rideau-
Goulbourn (21), Gloucester South
Nepean (22)

File Number: ACS2019-OCC-GEN-0007

SUBJECT: Stonebridge Community Levy Vote

OBJET: Vote sur une prélèvement à Stonebridge

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance and Economic Development Committee recommend that Council approve a community-wide ballot to determine support for an area specific levy in order to purchase 198 acres of golf course lands located in the Stonebridge Community.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des finances et du développement économique recommande au Conseil d'approuver la tenue d'un vote, à l'échelle de la collectivité, pour déterminer si les résidents sont favorables ou non à un prélèvement propre au secteur afin d'acquérir un terrain de golf de 198 acres dans la collectivité de Stonebridge.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since April 2019, the [Stonebridge Working Group \(SWG\)](#) has been working with Jack Stirling, the facilitator contracted by the City of Ottawa (City), to find a solution for the Stonebridge Golf Course acceptable to the Stonebridge Community (Community).

The proposed solution has two components:

- 1) An agreement to purchase 198 acres of golf course lands
- 2) A means of funding the purchase of these lands

The details of the proposal were shared with the Community through an in person and live-streamed public meeting, multiple open houses, the Stonebridge Community Association (SCA) website and social media channels, and the SCA email newsletter.

Feedback was received through a survey and at the public sessions. Based on feedback received, the SWG has recommended that a community-wide ballot be held to determine whether an area specific levy would be supported in order to purchase the 198 acres that is currently the Stonebridge Golf Course.

BACKGROUND

In June 2018, Mattamy Homes put forward a plan to redevelop part of their privately-owned Stonebridge Golf Course, proposing the development of additional homes in the area. The developer subsequently withdrew its application in July 2018 after residents expressed concerns about the effects this would have on the course and surrounding

community. Residents of the Stonebridge community have cited a variety of concerns over potential redevelopment, ranging from the initial concept of the community, property values, loss of greenspace and lowered quality of life, among other things.

After multiple public meetings coordinated by the [Stonebridge Community Association](#), Mattamy Homes and the City of Ottawa, the Stonebridge Working Group (SWG) was formed to meet on a regular basis, identify issues, options and go-forward solutions that work for all parties. Led by associates from The Stirling Group Development Initiatives Inc., the SWG has involved members from the community, the Stonebridge Community Association and Mattamy Homes.

DISCUSSION

A proposed solution regarding the future of the Stonebridge Golf Course was presented at a community meeting on July 30th, 2019. Highlights are as follows:

Mattamy Homes Agrees to:

- Only develop Phase 16 (~158 units); no further development of any kind
- Continue to operate the golf course to its current standards for a minimum of 10 years (2029)
- If Mattamy decides to sell the golf business, provide 2 years' written notice
- Provide the Stonebridge Community the option to purchase the golf course lands (198 acres), the clubhouse, maintenance facility and all Mattamy-owned equipment for \$6M upon Mattamy ceasing to operate the golf course.

The Stonebridge community agrees to:

- Pay a special area levy to the City of Ottawa which would be used by the City to purchase the golf course lands (198 acres), the clubhouse, maintenance facility and all Mattamy-owned equipment for \$6M upon Mattamy ceasing to operate the golf course.
- Only use the land for the operation of a golf course or convert it to greenspace in the event that operating the golf course is no longer financially viable.
- If converted to greenspace, allow Mattamy to develop a portion of the clubhouse and maintenance area land (as indicated in previous slide) as its final development in the community.

The Stonebridge community is being asked* to:

- Not oppose Mattamy's Phase 16 development application

*Individual residents maintain the legal right to object the application

To ensure that the Community was well informed and that the SWG had sufficient input from the Community, the SWG and Jack Stirling made themselves available to address hundreds of questions on SCA social media channels (Facebook and Twitter), the SCA website, email, phone and at several scheduled public in-person sessions including three five-hour Q&A sessions.

The sessions were done in one-on-one discussions and in small groups to give everyone an opportunity to be heard. The SWG also accommodated requests from particular resident groups (eg, street groups) that wished to meet and discuss the proposal.

Survey

A preliminary survey was conducted by the Stonebridge Working Group from July 30th to August 20th to gauge community sentiment on the proposed solution and the option for the community to purchase the golf course through a levy. The community billboards, SCA website, emails, and social media were again used to encourage the Community to respond to the survey. The survey ran for three weeks until August 20th and was used to gauge community sentiment. Responses were collected from 1368 individuals.

After applying a filter to include only homeowners living in the Community and to only include completed surveys, the total number of responses used for analysis purposes was 1039 in a community of approximately 3300 households. The number of responses was large enough to ensure statistical validity.

The survey had two multiple-choice questions as well as a series of open-ended questions that offered residents an opportunity to share their thoughts in more detail.

The First Survey Question: **What is your first reaction to the proposed solution?**

Very positive: 27%

Somewhat positive: 29%

Neutral: 8%

Somewhat negative: 15%

Very negative: 20%

The Second Survey Question: **If a vote on the levy was to be held today, how likely would you be to vote in favour of it?**

Extremely likely: 29%

Very likely: 19%

Somewhat likely: 16%

Not so likely: 12%

Not at all likely: 25%

The Open-Ended Questions:

In your own words, what are the things that you like most about this proposed solution?

In your own words, what are the things that you would most like to improve in this proposed solution?

Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?

With 56% positive first reactions to the proposed solution, 64% likely to vote in favour of the levy, and ongoing input throughout the process, the SWG believes that the Community has demonstrated enough interest to recommend that the City conduct a formal ballot on the levy proposal.

Out of the 1039 residents that completed the survey, the vast majority provided detailed and lengthy comments to the open-ended questions. The SWG used these comments to create FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) to address compliments, concerns and misunderstandings with the proposal. To keep the Community informed, the FAQs have been emailed to the distribution list and posted on multiple social media channels and on the SCA website.

The comments indicated that the Community had further questions and concerns regarding some key themes, such as, ownership of the land, the levy process, details of the agreement including how to ensure no future development of the lands by anyone, including the City, and certainty that the levy funds raised will be used for the intended

purpose. The SWG will continue to use these and future comments in its ongoing work to refine the proposal. Another SWG community-wide meeting is scheduled for September 30th, 2019.

Next Steps

Upon approval of the community- wide ballot for the Stonebridge Levy, staff from Office of the City Clerk will oversee the ballot process in order to determine community support for a mandatory levy.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

Various forms of consultation and notification have taken place since the first application was filed and withdrawn by Mattamy. Consultation(s) and notification(s) include:

- Mattamy hosted community meeting, June 27, 2018
Stonebridge Golf Course and Country Club conference room
- City staff, Councillor and the members of the Stonebridge Community Association Meeting, January 14, 2019, City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue West
- SCA and City staff phone check in, January 24, 2019
- City and facilitator (Swerhun Facilitation) led Community Information Session, January 24, 2019, Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Ave, Nepean, ON K2G 1W2

Stonebridge Working Group:

- **Public Community Meeting:**
 - o July 30, 2019 from 7pm to 9pm, St. Joseph's High School
 - o September 30, 2019 from 7pm to 9pm, Nepean Sportsplex
- **Open House Sessions:**
 - o August 12, 2019 from 3pm to 8pm, Stonebridge Golf Course Clubhouse
 - o August 13, 2019 from 3pm to 8pm, Stonebridge Golf Course Clubhouse

- August 20, 2019 from 3pm to 8pm, Stonebridge Golf Course Clubhouse
- **Street Specific Meeting (Sandgate and Shadehill):**
 - August 21, 2019 from 7pm to 9pm, Minto Recreation Complex Barrhaven
- **Street Specific Meeting (Culloden):**
 - August 8, 2019 from 7pm to 9pm, Home of Culloden Resident
- **Community Group Requested Meeting:**
 - September 4, 2019 7pm to 9pm, Stonebridge Golf Course Clubhouse

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

Councillor Harder, Councillor Meehan and Councillor Moffat provided the following comment:

Over the last year and a half, we have been committed to finding the best solution for the residents of Stonebridge in terms of the golf course operations, future development and the long-term presence of the green space within the community. This report is a pivotal step in that process and provides the essential opportunity for the community to make this important decision on the future of their own community.

That said, we support the recommendations in the report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

City Council approved on July 12, 2017 a process for seeking approval of ward or part-ward specific special levies. The approved process provides the framework for the consideration of such special levies. However, unlike local improvement levies which must follow the process under the Local Improvement Regulation, a framework approved in a prior term of Council is not binding upon a subsequent Council.

In order to have authority under the *Municipal Act* to impose a levy for the purchase of the property, it is necessary that either the City owns the property or that an agreement of purchase and sale have been executed for its acquisition. Thus, pending the outcome of the vote by the Stonebridge community, subsequent to any Council approval of the levy but prior to its imposition, such an agreement would need to be signed.

The Council approved policy provides for a ninety day consultation period including at least one open house and one public meeting. The issue of consultation prior to the

Council authorization for a vote on a special levy to proceed was not addressed in the 2017 report and may be a relevant consideration to abridge the requirements of the 2017 report. Staff understand the approximate amount of the special levy will be known prior to the consideration of this report by Council.

Should the recommendation be approved and the vote held in accordance with the process outlined therein, Council is not bound by the outcome of such vote.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct risks to the City associated with the recommendations of this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications associated with the recommendations of this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications. Costs associated with the voting process will be shared between the office budgets of the Councillors for Ward 3,21, 22.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

None.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This matter is not associated with any Term of Council priorities.

DISPOSITION

Upon approval of the community- wide ballot for the Stonebridge Levy, staff from Office of the City Clerk will oversee the ballot process in order to determine community support for a mandatory levy.