

Subject: Meeting with Toronto Water (TW) and Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation (PFR)

Date: 2017 Feb 27

Participants: Toronto Water – Bill Snodgrass
PFR, Urban Forestry – Ray Vendrig, Scott Laver, Julia Murnaghan
PFR, Capital Project – Dave Nosella (invited)
Neighbourhood Coalition – John Bossons, Rob Spindler

Purpose: To discuss issues in the development of a Master Plan for management and improvement of the Vale of Avoca and establishment of a Working Group for effective ongoing neighborhood input in the design and planning of the necessary work. PFR and TW will jointly report on this to the June meeting of the Parks and Environment Committee.

1) Context (City of Toronto Ravine Strategy)

- a) The Draft Principles and Actions of the Toronto Ravine Strategy were published in June 2016. The next step in the Ravine Strategy process is to generate a listing of ravine areas across the City which have a high priority for management and improvement. This list of ravines will be reported directly to Executive Committee at its meeting of May 16, and so are competing with the Vale of Avoca/Yellow Creek ravine for funding. It will be important to ensure that the Ravine Strategy is adequately funded.
- b) Reporting on a Vale of Avoca/Yellow Creek Master Plan for the ravine has been delayed to the June meeting in order to ensure consistency with the overall Ravine Strategy recommendations.
- c) The major stream bed repairs required to cope with peak storm water flows in the Yellow Creek (and other ravines) are the responsibility of different City Departments dependent on whose infrastructure is at risk.

2) Yellow Creek stream rehabilitation, erosion control (TW, TRCA, PFR)

- a) Timing of consultants' study: The TW Geomorphic Systems Master Plan EA study is expected to start in early 2018 and will likely take a couple of years, meaning it should be completed in 2020.
- b) Citizen input: Two public meetings will be held during the study to discuss study results, one after consultants' initial assessment of problems and opportunities, the second after proposals for remediation and improvement have been prepared. There will also be opportunity for neighborhood input during the consultants' initial site walk.

In the meantime, it was suggested that a walk-through be arranged in Spring/Summer 2017, between City staff and representatives of the neighbourhood coalition, to gather additional background data regarding the history and usage of the site.

- c) Timing of subsequent remedial work: The City and TRCA will undertake the remedial work in stages to be determined after conclusion of the Geomorphic EA study. The timing of work on the northern part of the ravine (cemetery to St Clair bridge) may depend on resolution of access issues with property owners on Heath Crescent and Rose Park Crescent whose properties may extend into the potential work area. City meeting participants acknowledged the potential to consider accelerating repair of the downstream bridges and

rehabilitation of the nearby stream bed without waiting for upstream issues to be resolved, once design alternatives for this work have been evaluated and finalized by the Geomorphic EA study .

The Mud Creek EA and repair process was offered as an example of the time potentially required to undertake Works to address Yellow Creek. It will have taken approximately 15 years from when the Mud Creek EA study was initiated in 2008 to when creek restoration projects will be completed.

3) Vale of Avoca paths, access, reforestation (PFR, TW)

- a) Areas adjacent to stream: Repairs and improvements to the path network adjacent to the stream will occur only after completion of the necessary stream bed rehabilitation. The nature and precise location of path improvements will depend on access requirements for and damage done by heavy construction equipment required to rebuild the stream bed and protect stream banks. These construction impacts may be a particularly serious issue between the cemetery and the St Clair bridge, and from the bridge downstream to the David A Balfour park trail at the base of Rosehill Ave., because of access difficulties.
- b) Because of the time required to implement the necessary Yellow Creek stream bed and bank repairs /Mt Pleasant Cemetery storm sewer repairs, it is unlikely that much work can be done on adjacent park/path improvements before 2020 at the earliest. Coordination by PFR and Toronto Water will be required to achieve as fast a pace of ravine remediation as is possible.
- c) Other paths and access stairs: A TRCA Study is underway which would provide the foundation for considering the two stairs that need to be rebuilt (at Heath Crescent and Mathersfield) and associated planning exercises in 2017. The timing and nature of additional path improvements above the area affected by stream bank repair, including access from the Rosehill Reservoir and connections from the Mathersfield stairs to other areas in the ravine, will require coordination between several ongoing projects. Funding of path improvements adjacent to the Mathersfield steps may require additional funds.
- d) Evaluation of reforestation and ground-cover plantings, of vital importance for long-term erosion control on the steep ravine slopes, will be initiated as part of the Geomorphic EA study. The actual reforestation and plantings will likely be done subsequent to completion of each segment of the stream restoration project. The timing and extent of this work will be decided based on technical factors and consultation with public.

4) Funding, timing (Councillors)

- a) The availability of funds for the necessary repairs and improvements was discussed only tangentially. Though Toronto Water has identified the Yellow Creek Geomorphic EA study as a priority, funding and so timing of the repairs will be competing with other priorities across the City. The neighbourhood coalition representatives indicated that it is essential to ensure that the stream bed repairs are done expeditiously both for erosion control and to move ahead with park improvements.
- b) The availability of funds for park improvements and repairs may be problematic without access to Section 37 funds in Wards 27 and 22.
- c) Discussed the opportunity to form a Working Group, including representatives of the Neighbourhood Coalition, to facilitate public consultation and help to prioritize park improvement projects.

- d) There is potential for undertaking some park improvements above the areas affected by work on the stream channel, before the City and TRCA channel work is completed.
- e) These timing and funding issues are matters which neighbourhood coalition representatives may need to raise with Councillors.