

Study will look at how Town names landmarks, streets

From small but meaningful tributes planting trees in honour of loved ones at the Aurora Community Arboretum to large-scale recognition of financial contributions to the community like the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, numerous amenities around Town bear names that tell stories.

But an upcoming review will guide the Town on how these resources and gathering spaces ? present and future ? will be named.

Council has tasked staff with reviewing current naming policies following a motion from Councillor Harold Kim.

?My wife and I walk all the time [on trails] in Stouffville, Newmarket and here, and you always see things with a plaque on them and it is interesting reading their names,? said Councillor Kim. ?But it struck me: I wonder if there is a policy in terms of what if an organization wanted to put something in there? Can people put a plaque on anything other than just a memorial for a loved one? What if it is a group that is not considered a very friendly group where we have different agendas and putting some kind of plaque on it?

?In talking with staff, they said we don't have any kind of naming policy. There is some kind of guideline or traditions they went by, but never had an official policy. They said most municipalities do have a formal policy and the naming policy is not just for rocks, benches and plaques on stones. Why don't we just investigate and take a broader naming policy so they include everything??

It was a timely motion as the capital fundraising campaign for Aurora Town Square (formerly Library Square) draws to a close and some of the options on the table for the campaign included the possible sale of naming rights for various components of the project, including the outdoor water feature, which can double as a skating rink in the winter months, and the theatre and studio spaces that will form part of the extension to the Church Street School.

Speaking to his motion at the table, Councillor Kim said the current naming policy is far from ?exhaustive.?

?We need policies to be detailed, clear and concise,? he said. ?We have consistency each time an opportunity of this nature materializes.?

So agreed Councillor Wendy Gaertner, who added: ?I appreciate this motion and I think it will be interesting to see what staff say about it.?

By Brock Weir Editor Local Journalism Initiative Reporter