Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – March 12, 2024

REPORTS

Item No. 10 Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Edison Park

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee did not concur in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to Council:

1. That the park currently known as Edison Park (located at 1257 Henderson Highway) be renamed to Matheson Millstones Park.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Browaty,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service not be concurred in and the following be forwarded to Council:

1. That the park currently known as Edison Park (located at 1257 Henderson Highway) be renamed to Matheson Millstones Park.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Carried

Councillor Rollins asked to be recorded as having voted against the above motion, in accordance with Rule 47(7) of The Procedure By-law No. 50/2007.

Dr. Erin Millions, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Winnipeg, submitted a communication on behalf of the Committee of Community Members, Welcoming Winnipeg Initiative, in support of the matter.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Edison Park

Critical Path: Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Sveinson	M. Jack	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 30, 2020, Council passed a motion to adopt the Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy. This policy was developed to guide the City in making decisions regarding requests to create new, add to, or remove/rename historical markers and place names and resolve the absence of Indigenous histories and contributions in the stories remembered and commemorated. Welcoming Winnipeg will proactively utilize a lens of balance, inclusion, and Indigenous perspectives.

On October 19, 2020, the recommendation of the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee to rename Edison Park (located at 1257 Henderson Highway) to Matheson Millstones Park was referred by the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks to the Welcoming Winnipeg process.

Due to a clerical error, this request was not administered with others that were also received before the formal unveiling of the Welcoming Winnipeg request form and process in February 2021.

The Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History policy aligns at a municipal level with Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Call to Action #43. This request does not support the mandates that direct the work of the Indigenous Relations Division and the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members (CCM).

After careful consideration, the CCM is recommending that the park currently known as Edison Park not be renamed to Matheson Millstones Park. Instead, they recommend that the Indigenous Relations Division be directed to undertake a renaming process that is Indigenous-led, with the intention that the new name honours Indigenous Food Sovereignty, as a response to the presence of the millstones.

Any financial implications from the renaming consultation process will be allocated to the Indigenous Relations Division's Journey of Reconciliation budget.

When an appropriate name is identified, the Public Service will report back to Council seeking approval of the proposed name.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the park currently known as Edison Park (located at 1257 Henderson Highway) not be renamed to Matheson Millstones Park.

2. That the Indigenous Relations Division be directed to undertake a renaming process that is Indigenous-led, with the intention that the new name honours Indigenous Food Sovereignty, as a response to the presence of the millstones.

3. That, when an appropriate name is identified, the Public Service report back to Council seeking approval of the proposed name.

4. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On January 30, 2020, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee (EPC) that the recommendations of the community member-based committee be forwarded to EPC and then to Council for final decision.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no immediate implications to the recommendations of this report. If the recommendations are approved, the park currently known as Edison Park (located at 1257 Henderson Highway) will not be renamed to Matheson Millstones Park.

Instead, the Indigenous Relations Division will undertake a renaming process that is Indigenous-led, with the intention the new name honours Indigenous Food Sovereignty, as a response to the presence of the millstones.

When an appropriate name is identified, the Public Service will report back to Council seeking approval of the proposed name.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

Welcoming Winnipeg History

On January 30, 2020, Council passed a motion to adopt the Welcoming Winnipeg: Reconciling our History Policy. This policy was developed to guide the City in making decisions regarding requests to create new, add to, or remove/rename historical markers and place names and resolve the absence of Indigenous histories and contributions in the stories remembered and commemorated. Welcoming Winnipeg will proactively utilize a lens of balance, inclusion, and Indigenous perspectives.

As recommended in this policy, the inaugural Committee of Community Members (CCM) was established in August 2020; a key function of this committee is review requests to change

historical or place names and provide a recommendation to the Executive Policy Committee (EPC) and Council for final decision

Due to a clerical error, this request was not administered with others that were also received before the formal unveiling of the Welcoming Winnipeg request form and process in February 2021.

Considerations for this request

The CCM reviewed the decision-making history and the information provided (summarized in Appendix A). They received a delegation at the committee's September 18, 2023, meeting. Additionally, the public input that was collected over a two-week period was provided to the CCM to consider as part of their recommendation-making process. An overview of the feedback collected has been included in a Public Engagement Summary Report (Appendix B).

The CCM considered how this request meets the following definition of a "Welcoming Winnipeg" request, which was created through two phases of public engagement in 2019 and was refined by the CCM. A Welcoming Winnipeg request is one that:

- Ultimately achieves a balanced perspective/story;
- Honours Indigenous peoples as the original peoples of this land and the contemporary context in which Indigenous peoples continue to have relationship with this land;
- Promotes Indigenous reclamation of land, space and/or language;
- Offers an educational opportunity; or,
- Supports telling the complete history of Winnipeg.

Utilizing the Welcoming Winnipeg Request Assessment Tool (Appendix C), the CCM identified the following as key considerations:

1. Welcoming Winnipeg
    - Since 1966, two of the original millstones from the Matheson Mill have been located in this park. The Matheson Mill was built sometime between 1860 and 1870 by Alexander Matheson (1827-1911). The applicant submitted that the Matheson family was prominent in developing the community and the renaming of the park would be a great way to recognize the contributions they made and bring attention to the millstones and the story of their origin.
    - The CCM approached this request from the lens that it was less an acknowledgement about the individual (Alexander Matheson) and more about the commemoration of agricultural practices and promotion of the Selkirk Settlers as successful millers.
    - In terms of Welcoming Winnipeg contributing to "balanced perspectives", there are a number of City assets that already acknowledge the Selkirk Settlers/Matheson family and their contributions. What is often missing from this narrative is the assistance these settlers received from First Nations and Métis over a number of years that allowed them to successfully settle here.

2. Rationale
    - The millstones are a representation of colonization and the displacement of First Nations and Métis from this land, in spite of the Treaty. This displacement was done in the name

of agriculture, and the request does not acknowledge there were other successful methods of agriculture present before the arrival of settlers.

3. Community Support
    - With respect to the public input process, in response to the question: “Do you think the Committee of Community Members should support this request”, 83% of respondents said ‘yes’. There were 24 responses received.

4. Other considerations
    - Edison Park was named for the street it was located on and not for anyone of importance in the area, the name change would not detract from any historical significance associated to it.

        - Edison Avenue was name for American inventor Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931).

    - On October 2, 2020, the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee recommended to the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks that the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to rename Edison Park to Matheson Millstones Park, subject to:

        1. Funding for the signage being approved from the East Kildonan – Transcona Land Dedication Reserve (North Kildonan Ward allocation).

    - On October 19, 2020, the recommendation of the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee was referred by the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks to the Welcoming Winnipeg process.

After careful consideration, the CCM is recommending that the park currently known as Edison Park not be renamed to Matheson Millstones Park. Instead, they recommend that the Indigenous Relations Division be directed to undertake a renaming process that is Indigenous-led, with the intention the new name honours Indigenous Food Sovereignty, as a response to the presence of the millstones.

Any financial implications from the renaming consultation process will be allocated to the Indigenous Relations Division’s Journey of Reconciliation budget.

When an appropriate name is identified, the Public Service will report back to Council seeking approval of the proposed name.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** February 22, 2024

Project Name:
Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Edison Park

COMMENTS:
There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Randy Bernard
Randy Bernard, CPA, CMA
Manager of Finance & Administration (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

- Parks and Open Space (Public Works Department)

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Complete Communities Direction Strategy 2.0

1.2 Recognize and celebrate Indigenous heritage
Work collaboratively with Indigenous communities and stakeholders to recognize and celebrate Indigenous heritage values and spaces.

OurWinnipeg 2045

5.4 Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples
Prioritize municipal implementation responsibilities within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice. LG, ER, EP, HW, CB

5.8 Community Cohesion
Provide opportunities for creative, cultural, and artistic expression through municipal facility design, public place-making, and community-led initiatives to promote community relationship-building, identity and sense of belonging. HW, CB

5.9 Heritage Conservation
Provide opportunities for heritage education, truth-telling, and reconciliation, through the commemoration, conservation, and stewardship of both tangible and intangible heritage resources, including Indigenous land-based practices and artifacts, public names, places, and art, museum artifacts, and archived information. LG, HW

6.37 Heritage Conservation
Conserve cultural, natural, and heritage resources and districts, as defined in Complete Communities, and Indigenous land-based practices to celebrate sense of place through community history, architecture, civic identity and cultural perspectives. ER, HW

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Consideration was given as to whether this report connects to the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan (CAP), and it was determined that the CAP is not applicable to this specific report.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

The information and recommendations presented in this report align with and advance the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031) as follows:

They embody the following Guiding Principles:

- We will Uphold Human Rights
- We will Honour Relationships and Reconciliation with Indigenous People

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Chief Administrative Office
Division: Indigenous Relations Division
Prepared by: D. Carriere
Date: February 22, 2024
File No:

Attachments:

Appendix A: 2021-014 Request Summary

Appendix B: 2021-014 Public Engagement Summary Report

Appendix C: Welcoming Winnipeg – Request Assessment Tool