

**West Parry Sound Recreation Complex
Update – March 2008
Peter Hopkins and Maxine Davidson**

The following is a collection of bits of information, happenings and reports over the last two months. Even though we haven't met as a group for a while that doesn't mean that we have been quiet or inactive. Still lots of interesting happenings related to the WPS Recreation Complex Proposal and lots of people to thank. After our Proposal was presented to Wendy Donovan, the Consultant, in January/08 our package of materials and Proposal was distributed to all our Committee members, Long Range Steering Committee members, Mayors and Reeves in WPS, our MP, MPP and Government Officials, YMCA, North Star and the Moose FM.

1. Recent Meeting with Norm Miller, MPP

Peter Istvan, Maxine and Peter Hopkins had a half hour meeting with Norm on Monday, March 10th at 2 p.m.. Norm was very knowledgeable, warm and encouraging. He seemed very supportive and is willing to assist with grants when appropriate. He said it was important to have the Municipalities work with partners like the Y for granting purposes. He realizes that there is not an aquatic centre in WPS. The new Bracebridge facility, where he is situated, is well used. It is operated by the community and was built in conjunction with the new high school and other partners. It was an excellent meeting. The committee thanked Norm for initiating the meeting and looked forward to working with him in the future.

2. Beacon Star Article

The Committee would like to thank Charlene Peck for her excellent article on our Proposal in the Feb 1, 2008 Beacon Star – entitled "Pushing for a Swimming Pool". We have had a lot of positive feedback on the article. For example:

- "Great article in the Beacon Star in regards to getting a Recreation Complex in Parry Sound. Much needed and many many years overdue. Kudos to you for taking the bull by the horns and pushing forward and doing so much work..." Sara Kinnear, former resident, MacDougall
- "Way to go Peter. I have joined the Y in Wasaga Beach – called the Rec Plex – YMCA and Community Centre...it's amazing." Elaine Summers, former resident, Whitestone.
- "Looks like your committee has been very active in getting stuff together...Good luck as you proceed..." Russ Johnson, McDougall.
- "I would be very available and interested to do whatever is needed to prompt this project. My major complaint sine moving in this area was lack of such a centre...I know that we would be able to attract and retain more of our young people if we were able to offer such a facility...I would to assist in any way I can to make an indoor pool a reality..." Janice Vershuere, Parry Sound.
- "The article looks good but there is a lot of work to be done in convincing the right people. Good luck..." Terry Stanley, Whitestone.
- "I have long dreamed that there would be a pool built in Parry Sound...am excited to learn that there is a committee that is actively pursuing this issue. If there is any support that I can offer...let me know how to get involved (fundraising, personal ideas, etc.)", Amanda Vershuere, raised in Parry Sound.

3. Committee Feedback

Maybe members of the Committee have heard other comments. Please let Peter I, Maxine or Peter Hopkins know.

4. Website Update

Special thanks to Peter Istvan and Dan Connoghan (The Big Brain) for updating our web site www.pscomplex.com. New inclusions are our WPS Recreation Complex Proposal and a copy of Charlene Peck's Feb 1, 2008 Beacon Star article. Peter I continues to follow-up all inquiries to our site. As well, Dan and the Moose FM have agreed to promote our site in the next few months. Thanks Dan, Peter I and The Moose.

NOTE: If anyone is interested in our project it is easy to just refer them to the site for more information.

5. Schematic

Brenda Ryan, our Committee's architect, has agreed to do up a few schematics of what a complex might look like. Go Brenda!!

6. Optimists Donation

Thanks to Larry Barnes and the Optimists Club for their recent donation of \$5300 to the YMCA.

7. Long Range Culture and Recreation Plan Update

According to Nicole Sullivan, Economic Development Coordinator, there will be a Steering Committee meeting April 9th, 2008 where more sections of the report will be reviewed. After this and one more phase to be reviewed there will be a public meeting in late April or early May, 2008. Will keep you informed.

8. New School in Town?

There may be a possibility of a new school to be built in PS if the two inner town schools are closed. Maybe the School Board could look at a positive partnership with the YMCA. Nothing ventured...

9. Presentation to the YMCA's Board and Strategic Planning Group Feb 1, 2008

Unfortunately the meeting had to be cancelled due to inclement weather and is to be rescheduled sometime in May or June. I faxed Tom Coon, Y's CEO, a brief statement on our committee's behalf (before the meeting was cancelled).

"Hi, I am Peter Hopkins, Co-Chair of the WPS Recreation Complex Committee. We have been working for almost three years to bring a full-service recreation complex to our community. A year ago, the Y was generously gifted the Optimist centre in PS. You made an excellent selection when you hired Katie Garbett as Manager. She's excellent and has been very busy setting up day care, day camp and fitness programs. You already have over 150 members and should be congratulated on your successes to date. Our committee has been equally busy developing our Proposal for a full-service complex as well as attending many, many Master Planning meetings. Last week we finally presented our Proposal to Wendy Donovan, the dma consultant, who is responsible for developing a Mater Plan for Culture and Recreation in 3/7 communities. In short, our Proposal recommends that the 7 municipalities and the YMCA work collaboratively over the next while to develop a detailed plan for a full-service YMCA to be built in staged at the new Y site. A project similar to Wasaga Beach. Our Proposal can be found at www.pscomplex.com and Tom has a copy. We realize that you have already committed yourselves to a five year plan. We sincerely hope that you seize this opportunity and work towards creating this exciting possibility in

WPS.

10. YMCA Update

Katie Garbett reports that the YMCA now has over 150 members and hopes to reach a goal of 200 in the next few months. (It should be noted that at least five of use are involved with the new Y – Peter Hopkins, Sue Woodhouse, Peter Istvan, Dean Harris and Shannon Tuck) If there are others, please let Peter H. know)

Their Annual Campaign called “STRONG KIDS” is now fundraising to allow children to be part of the Y who otherwise could not afford to do so. So far over \$600,000 has been raised toward a goal of \$600,000

Renovations have been completed for the Day Care Centre. Now they are able to accommodate 24 children.

New programs begin March 25th.

11. More Complexes

Anita Brunet-Lamarche, our Gov't Consultant in Sudbury has again been very helpful by providing site and insights into several newer Recreation Complexes in the area – Bracebridge, Cochrane, Orangeville, Hamilton Y, Town Centre in Wellington to name a few. Maxing has added them to our collection of Complexes. Thank you Anita for your ongoing support.

12. Wasaga Beach

Peter H will be going to Wasaga Beach to visit friends the end of March and meet with the Manager Chris Roos, collect some materials and actually use the facilities, pool and spa.

UPDATE: Many thanks, Chris, for taking the time to show us around the new Wasaga Complex. It was quite impressive. The leisure pool was exciting, the fitness area impressive and the five locker rooms a wonderful concept. I will take a look at the video over the next few days. Thank you again for the tour.

As you can see, there is a lot going on. Please give us some feedback from your friends.