

May 2017

RUSSELL ROAD PROPERTY – QUICK FACTS

- The Town of Ladysmith purchased the property at 900 Russell Road in 2003 when it was listed by a realtor (Kent Knelson). At the time, Council thought that a portion of the property might be used for future playing fields.
- The Town paid the full listed asking price of \$190,000 for the property.
- The only condition on the sale was that Council approval was required. This condition was removed one week after the purchase offer.
- At the time the Town purchased it, the property was zoned R-1 (Suburban Residential). It is still zoned R-1 (called Single Dwelling Residential since the Zoning Bylaw was updated in 2014.)
- The property has never been zoned as parkland, nor was it ever established as a park by the Town.
- The Town was interested in acquiring other surrounding parcels; however these parcels were purchased by other parties.
- Because the original intent was to use a portion of the property for playing fields, the Town paid for the purchase using funds from the Real Property Reserve and the Development Cost Charges (Parks) Funds. As with any purchase of property, if the originally intended use of the property changes, the DCC Parks funds can and will be replaced.
- There are 33 + acres of property to the south and west of 900 Russell Road that are zoned P-3 – Natural Park. The Town acquired all that property specifically to ensure that there is green space in the south end as other sites continue to be developed.
- The Town's Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan references the parkland at the end of Russell Road and Stirling Drive as an Open Space Park intended to protect and manage wildlife, habitat and other natural system support functions. Open Space Parks are linked to neighbourhood sidewalks, pathways and trails and are intended to contribute to the overall connectivity of the open space system. This Master Plan does not include any reference to the property at 900 Russell Road. The attached map shows the appropriately zoned parkland in South Ladysmith in 2017.

- Residents were consulted during the development of our Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan in 2015 and 2016. The plan provides direction for council about the type of park amenities that are desirable for the south end of Ladysmith.
- In 2010, the Town contracted with Capital Asset Group, Marianne Stoltz, to act as Land Agent and market various Town-owned properties for sale, including 900 Russell Road
- In 2012, the Town issued a request for proposals from developers interested in acquiring the property. No proposals were received.
- Following that Request for Proposals, the Town continued to offer the property for sale both through our land agent and independently . The property was listed for sale on our website throughout this time. Staff have responded on several occasions (perhaps twice a year) to requests for information packages from realtors representing interested parties. Generally during that time period, Council directed that 20 to 30 per cent of the property was to be set aside as parkland.
- Council referred the matter of the Russell Road property to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Advisory Commission in 2013. The Commission recommended that 50 per cent be set aside as parkland. Council responded (and rose/reported) that preserving this amount of the property for recreation purposes was not economically viable.