



November. 28, 2024

Debbie Leroux, Clerk
Township of Uxbridge
51 Toronto St., Box 190
Uxbridge, Ont. L9P 1T1

Re: Community building
King Street Parkette (Township of Uxbridge)
Zoning By-Law Amendment 2024-08 (ZBA 2024-08)

I've lived around the corner from the King St. Parkette for more than 30 years. When my family and I arrived, it had a substantial swing structure with six swings and a sandbox. In the past few years, the swings disappeared one by one and were not replaced although the structure still stands there. The attitude of the municipal government seems to be that no one uses it so we will sell it off.

Once that occurs, the opportunity for its use as a community builder is gone forever. Also lost will be at least two, but probably three, mature (not old) maple trees – one in the centre of the lot and two at the street. As someone who lost nine during the tornado that struck our side of town in 2022, I value trees for their beauty, their shade that reduces the “urban heat island effect,” and their role in reducing carbon dioxide – especially in this era of climate change.

Our pocket park has been neglected, a victim of a lack of imagination shown by our council and residents like me. We assume a small park is an oasis for children only and when neighbourhoods change as children grow and move away, it becomes pointless. However, the COVID years have led to an influx of young families in this area, so potentially there will soon be more kids to utilize the park. But kids are not the only ones who could enjoy this leafy enclave.

In its present state (and for some time) it is definitely not inviting. But this could be our *Field of Dreams*. If we make minimal changes, “They (park users) will come.” We need community building.

- **We need at least two benches within conversational distance of each other.**

The many **daily walkers** could stop to drink their water and chat.

Young moms could easily connect with others navigating this stressful stage of life.

Make friends with neighbours. Invite them to bring their coffees to the park and get to know each other after a brief walk – no driving.

Benches can be beautiful! Check out TVO's *Life-Sized City: Montreal*. A creative organization called Bois Public uses trees removed by the city (many because of ash borers) to plane the lumber needed for their sculptural benches. I suspect Uxbridge could supply trees that would otherwise be burned and add to air pollution.

- **A picnic table** would be useful for a Harvest potluck or perhaps a Solstice party or carol singing during the festive winter season.
- **But currently, accessibility is difficult.** A ditch runs along the road in front of the park, with a grassy entrance ramp of perhaps four feet. Hard enough for a mother with a stroller to overcome and even more difficult for someone in a wheelchair. Not great either for someone using a cane.
- **Wide boards in the ground** around the centre tree need to be removed. They are a tripping hazard that may be a leftover from sandbox days.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer a few ideas. I'm sure there are many in this township who have even more valuable ones and have the connections and expertise to realize them.

Please think about the future and what a small but community-centred park could offer.

Yours truly,

Jayne MacAulay

