



Subject: Port Colborne Municipal Drain

To: Council

From: Public Works Department

Report Number: 2021-148

Meeting Date: June 14, 2021

Recommendation:

That Public Works Department Report 2021-148 be received; and

That staff be directed to advance the Port Colborne Municipal Drain Engineer's Report to a 'Meeting to Consider', under Section 41, Chapter D.17 of the *Drainage Act*.

Purpose:

This report has been initiated in response to the final delivery of the Port Colborne Municipal Drain Engineer's Report, as prepared by Paul Marsh, P. Eng of EWA Engineering Inc. The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the Engineer's Report and requisite actions pertaining to the Meeting to Consider.

Background:

Current information/research indicates that the earliest record of the Port Colborne Municipal Drain dates back to 1880-1900. The Port Colborne Drain, being a branch drain to the Wignell Municipal Drain, has undergone several changes and reports since the 1880s, including the deepening of the outlet and main Wignell Channel, widening of the drain, and implementation of a gate structure on the Wignell Drain. The original outlet for the Port Colborne Drain ran through what is now known as the parcel owned and operated by Vale. This section of drain was abandoned when the drain was redirected to outlet at the Wignell Drain south of the Friendship Trail and was subsequently renamed at that time.

The Port Colborne Drain is best described as an open channel ditch with an overall length of 3,368m, servicing a total area of 327.8 hectares. This watershed can be defined by two distinct catchment areas, the main drain, and one branch drain. The

main drain begins at the Friendship Trail and meanders northeast to Second Concession Road, whereas Branch Drain #1 collects runoff from Snider Road north of Highway #3 and outlets into the main drain just south of Highway #3.

In 2018, the Engineering & Operations Report No. 2018-103, presented Council with the background and rationale leading up to the appointment Paul Marsh, P. Eng of EWA Engineering to complete the new Engineer's Report for the Wignell, Michener and Beaverdam Municipal Drain.

Discussion:

The Port Colborne Drain is being considered through its own report, and the Wignell Drain will continue to be the outlet, thus still be assessed through the Wignell report. A reason for the separation of these reports is to ease the public process with intentions of expediting works should one drain be more contentious than the other.

The Port Colborne Drain proper, has experienced a number of changes, summarized below, which together made a new report necessary:

- Separation from the Wignell Drain to its own report,
- Severance of land which requires an update of assessment schedule,
- Slight boundary adjustment of the watershed,
- Relocations of certain portions of the drain,
- Renaming of the drain,
- Implementations of branch drains.

For these reasons, and the requirement for a new assessment schedule, this report has been revised in 2021.

Since his appointment in 2018, Paul Marsh, P. Eng. of EWA has completed a full Hydrological and Hydraulics study of the Wignell Municipal Drain watershed allowing for a comprehensive analysis of each sub watershed. Additionally, as a precursor to the Port Colborne Report, a baseline report was written and submitted on November 22, 2018. The Baseline Report reviewed any existing concerns within the watershed and established the direction of service that was required.

On October 24, 2018, the first Public Information Center (PIC) was held to introduce the newly appointed Engineer to the property owners within the watershed. Mr. Marsh explained where he had started with the project and collected information from concerned residents.

After processing concerns from the previous meeting, a second PIC was held, on March 7, 2019. Again, Mr. Marsh explained to those in attendance the solutions and the next steps.

The final version of the Engineer's Report by EWA Engineering Inc. was delivered to the City of Port Colborne on May 20, 2021, and subsequently filed with the City Clerk on June 11, 2020.

Receipt of the Engineer's Report, under Section 41, Chapter D.17 of the *Drainage Act*, requires advancement of the report to a Meeting to Consider and initiates the obligations of the public process, including mailing each owner of the watershed and more importantly public meetings dates.

Financial Implications:

The Engineer's Report, as it currently stands, indicates a total estimated cost of \$296,048.10 (as shown on page 2 of the Engineer's Report), for the construction of the Port Colborne Municipal Drain inclusive of engineering, administration, interest and HST (net). The total estimated cost of construction for the Port Colborne Drain and Branch Drain #1 is \$117,837.74, with the balance of \$178,210.36 for engineering and administration. Of the total estimated cost, the portion for the City's municipal properties is \$70,772.71 of which a portion will be allocated from the storm water fees and the remainder from the tax levy. These figures will be defined in a following report.

Should this report not proceed, the municipality will not have the opportunity to collect the funds that have already been spent to date. Those funds include the expense for the engineering of this report as outlined above, realignment work that was completed in 2016 by the municipality at a total of \$52,212.50 and the associated costs from the debenture that was taken in 2007.

All upfront administration and financing will be borne by the city. Once the report is adopted and the construction is completed, the cost of the project will be expensed to the assessed property owners, according to the schedules contained within the report.

Conclusion:

An up-to-date Engineer's Report allows for routine drain maintenance and, subsequently, effective roadside ditching programs, which in turn allows staff to provide a reasonable level of service.

The Municipality is bound by the *Drainage Act* to comply and proceed accordingly thus proceeding under Section 41 of the Act complies with these proceedings.

The advancement of this report then initiates a public process, beginning with the mailing of the Engineer's Report and a notification for the upcoming 'Meeting to Consider' to each owner within the watershed. (Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and recommendations by public health, the meeting will be held virtually.)

Appendices:

- a. Port Colborne Municipal Drain Report dated April 16, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Alana Vander Veen
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Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.