



STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG

Community Services, Protection, and Economic Development Standing Committee

Report to: Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors
From: Brian Geerts; Director, Community Services
Standing Committee Date: February 7, 2024
Report Number: COMM-2024-004
Council Meeting Date: February 28, 2024
Subject: **Park Naming Request – Ron Bolt Park**

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1. Recommendation:

THAT Council receive this report for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT Council approve the naming of the parkland bounded by Caddy Drive, Lees Avenue, and Caddy Drive, known as 857 Caddy Drive (currently informally known as New Amherst Parkette), as Ron Bolt Park; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to erect a new park sign recognizing the new name; and

FURTHER THAT Council encourage citizens to come forward with naming recommendations for other municipal facilities to recognize and celebrate Cobourg's rich culture.

2. Executive Summary:

The Town of Cobourg is committed to providing a fair, consistent, and efficient process concerning naming, renaming, or dedicating municipal assets such as parks, streets, and facilities.

3. Background

The Town's Municipal Naming Policy 6-2 #LEG-ADM1 outlines the considerations and process for naming municipal parks, streets, recreational areas, and facilities within the Town of Cobourg.

4. Discussion:

In general, naming a public facility, such as a park, after a local person is a decision that carries significance and should be approached thoughtfully. Several considerations should be considered:

Legacy and Contributions:

Consider the individual's contributions to the community, society, or field. The person being honoured should have a positive and lasting impact that aligns with the values of the community.

Community Input:

Seek input from the local community, including residents, community leaders, and relevant stakeholders. Public opinion can provide valuable insights and help ensure the chosen name resonates with the community.

Inclusivity and Diversity:

Reflect on the diversity of the community and strive for inclusivity. Ensure that the person being honoured has positively impacted a broad cross-section of the community and that the name is not divisive.

Historical Context:

Consider the historical context of the individual's contributions. Ensure that the person's legacy is accurately represented and that no controversial aspects could cause discomfort.

Relevance:

Assess the relevance of the individual's contributions to the facility's purpose. The person's legacy should align with the intended use and goals of the public space.

Family and Personal Wishes:

If possible, consult with the family or close associates of the person being honoured. Respect their wishes and ensure that the naming is done in a manner sensitive to the feelings of the individual's loved ones.

Longevity and Timelessness:

Consider whether the chosen name will stand the test of time. Avoid names that may become outdated or lose their significance over the years.

Consistency with Naming Policies:

Check if existing naming policies or guidelines exist for public facilities. Ensure that the proposed name aligns with these policies and maintains consistency with other named facilities in the area.

Educational Value:

Assess whether the name provides an opportunity for education and inspiration. Consider how the person's story can be shared with future generations to promote understanding and appreciation.

Public Relations Impact:

Evaluate the potential public relations impact of the chosen name. Ensure that it fosters a positive image of the community and reflects well on the values and aspirations of the locality.

By carefully considering these factors, decision-makers can make informed choices that celebrate the contributions of local individuals in a manner that resonates positively with the community.

The Town's Naming Policy outlines explicitly the following Principles to consider:

3.1 When a municipal street, facility, or park is named, renamed or dedicated, the following principles shall be applied when a name is being considered:

- names should give a sense of place, continuity, and belonging and celebrate the distinguishing characteristics and uniqueness of the Town of Cobourg;
- names should promote civic pride in the Town of Cobourg, acknowledge local cultural heritage and history and recognize unique features and geography (such as names relating to local history, places, events, native wildlife and natural features or distinctive characteristics of a neighbourhood or area.)
- the rationale associated with using particular names shall be understandable to most Town of Cobourg residents.
- names may recognize the contributions of organizations, such as a partnership with or without financial contributions.

3.2 Priority shall be given to naming, renaming or dedicating a municipal street, facility, or park after:

- the area or street in which the property or building is located to provide a geographical association to help the public locate a park, bridge, neighbourhood or building more easily;
- an historical name related to the Town of Cobourg's cultural heritage and history;
- an organization or individual to recognize particular activities, significant contributions to the community, and outstanding contributions and sponsorships made toward developing and enhancing a property or building.

Analysis:

As per the policy, staff have considered the significance of the proposed name. Ron Bolt has significantly impacted the community over five decades of professional activity as a Cobourg resident. The Art Gallery of Northumberland recently held a retrospective of his work from October 7, 2023 to January 6, 2024.

A reflection on Ron Bolt's impact and accomplishments from this retrospective (Constructing Wonder | A 50-Year Retrospective Exhibition – AGN Online (artgalleryofnorthumberland.ca)):

“In this exhibition, the viewer travels through over fifty years of Ron Bolt's oeuvre, experiencing the peripatetic journeyman through paintings, drawings, and prints. These are the careful markings of a man who moved, in the 1960s, from the world of graphic art to that of a fine artist whose focus has been on understanding and appreciating nature's sacredness and sublimity.

Bolt is the quixotic voyager with camera in hand, observing the grand vista and the minutiae of the scene before him. Capturing light on the water is impossible to observe by the human eye, but there, caught by the lens, manipulated through ink, paint, and collage by the intermediary, the artist who presents the world to the viewer in a way recognizable... but not. We may think we know the landscape, but the details in this work draw us in, ask us to literally look more closely and then force us out again as we contemplate anew.

Environmentalism can be seen as a core theme of Bolt's work. As he has travelled the world over the past decades, he has seen first-hand the destruction and degradation of the world around him. He has remarked that “we are quite possibly living in the twilight of the natural world as we

have known it. In that regard, my work is an act of preservation. To preserve the natural world is to preserve a language of the wind and shifting light, of stillness, silence and space.” The work is more than an homage to nature, but a rallying cry. Whether in detail or a panoramic view, these worlds are majestic and worthy not only of our contemplation but of our support.

Ron Bolt was born in Toronto in 1938. He graduated as a gold medallist from Northern Technical School and furthered his art studies through courses at the Ontario College of Art and Ryerson Polytechnic. He was the 27th President of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, awarded the Canada 125 Medal in 1992, the Queen’s Jubilee Medal in 2002, and the RCA’s Centennial Medallion in 2005. His work has been shown in over a hundred and twenty solo and group exhibitions.”

No other naming requests are on a listing maintained by Community Services for park or facility naming.

The area recommended by the applicant is suitable for naming. The area has been colloquially termed “New Amherst Parkette” due to the lack of an official name. There is no requirement through a subdivision agreement or other document to maintain the current naming convention at 857 Caddy Drive.



Figure 1: 857 Caddy Drive: The park area to be named Ron Bolt Park

5. Financial Impact and Budget

The erection of a new sign and any other minor costs will be borne in approved 2024 operating budgets.

6. Relationship to Council's Strategic Plan Priorities 2023 to 2027 and beyond:

☒ Thriving Community

The naming of public parks after individuals has a significant impact on community identity, sense of pride, and overall well-being.

☐ Service Excellence

☐ Sustainability

7. Public Engagement:

This report and application have been posted publicly as part of the public and transparent process of Committee and Council reports. If any member of the public has a concern about the renaming of the parkland at 857 Caddy Drive in Cobourg to Ron Bolt Park, they may express their concerns in writing to the Director, Community Services bgeerts@cobourg.ca by February 27, 2024.

8. Attachments:

Naming Policy
Naming Policy Application
Letter of support

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Ron Bolt Naming Request.docx
Attachments:	- Naming-Policy-proposed-Ron Boltbad32e5f-da03-43a1-bea6-a78e57f12bec.pdf - Kelly Bolt Recommendation.pdf - Naming Policy.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jan 30, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tracey Vaughan, Chief Administrative Officer - Jan 30, 2024 - 12:12 PM