

September 15, 2011

Town Council committed to this major renovation to modernize the dated facility and address significant building maintenance issues, and also to add new amenities to serve the community. This has been a major undertaking and there have been some significant challenges. It is now nearly finished and the result is a state-of-the-art, fully accessible facility that will serve the interests of residents for many years.

What's new in the sports complex renovation?

- 6 new dressing rooms
- New ice surface and spectator seating in the east ice pad
- New lobby with lounge, snack bar & pro shop
- Fully accessible 2nd floor meeting space and washrooms
- New offices for the minor hockey and skating associations
- New 6,000 west-end community hall with banquet service area

The improved east pad, lobby and dressing rooms alone would cost \$13 million to build new and the 6,000 square-foot community hall addition would cost \$2 million as a stand-alone facility, bringing the total value to \$15 million. Yet the renovation will cost under \$4 million, of which 50% is funded by the federal and provincial governments.

Over the duration of the project, delays and additional costs were brought on by problems discovered in the ground and behind walls. "When you start a renovation like this, you can't be entirely certain just what you're going to run into," said principal architect George Kneider.

"During the renovation, as walls were opened and roof trusses were revealed, we discovered structural weaknesses, rotten wood, problems with the original building that had to be fixed, and problems under the ground. The original building was 40 years old, so these issues are unknown until existing building elements are exposed. Now they have all been overcome. Also, about a quarter of the additional costs resulted from the added scope of work to enhance the front facade, provide accessible sidewalks and extra landscaping."



East pad viewing gallery

"Keeping the arena open during construction helped save us \$35,000 and allowed us to continue our minor hockey season uninterrupted."

Alan Miller, President EGMHA

The Sports Complex has now opened for the 2011-2012 season. The new east ice pad and dressing rooms are ready, the ice is in, the portables have been removed, and both arena pads are fully serviceable while the finishing details in other areas of the facility are being completed.

During most projects like this, the building would have been empty. "It was a major accomplishment to undertake a renovation of this scope and at the same time keep the building open for the public," said Kneider.

Given this has been a priority project for Town Council, Mayor Virginia Hackson has been actively involved to ensure the primary user groups have been engaged and the facility is ready to accommodate the beginning of the 2011-2012 season. "This has been an enormous undertaking and we could never have accomplished this without the stimulus funding," she said. "Although that brought with it some unique challenges, we now have an



Lori Armstrong with Luke, one of the first hockey players through the new front entrance.



excellent, state-of-the-art facility that will benefit East Gwillimbury residents for many years to come."

Project timing and budget summary

With hundreds of similar projects underway in Ontario using the same funding program, and all under the same deadlines, there was a serious shortage of contractors and materials. This caused delays, not just in East Gwillimbury but in virtually every participating municipality. As a result, the project funding deadlines were extended by the federal and provincial governments to October 2011. The Town committed to providing a functioning east ice pad for the beginning of the 2011/2012 hockey season and this has been achieved.

"The original project budget was \$2.9 million, of which two-thirds was provided by stimulus funding," said Wayne Hunt, the Town's General Manager of Community Programs and Infrastructure. "Given the unforeseen construction challenges, more work was required to ensure we met all construction and accessibility standards." Council raised the upper budgetary limit to \$3.9 million and the additional funds will be taken from the Town's available reserves.

The 6,000 square-foot community centre addition on the west end will be the final component in the project and the Town is optimistic all construction will be complete this fall.

The full staff report on the project is available at eastgwillimbury.ca. Click on the "Sports Complex Renovations" button.



Zambunnies synchronized team eager to be the first skaters onto the east pad.



New dressing rooms are colour-coded.

"We are really looking forward to having the new central office and coaches' room to improve communication among our members."

Clodagh Coker, President EGSC