Council Direction:
At the Emergency and Community Services meeting of December 5, 2007, staff was directed to report back on the feasibility and costs associated with adding squash court(s) at Chedoke Golf Course Club House.

Information:
The direction to staff included meeting with Mr. Paul Lloyd. Mr. Lloyd represents a group of individuals who were interested in the idea of financing and constructing a 7,000 to 8,000 sq/ft squash facility to the existing Chedoke Golf Course Clubhouse.

Recreation Division staff reviewed the feasibility of adding a squash court facility and provides the following summary for Committee's information.

Based on physical and environmental review, it is not feasible to add an addition to the existing golf course clubhouse nor does staff recommend the Chedoke location as the best site for a squash facility.

Staff met with Mr. Lloyd to review the physical and environmental issues of the site. After reviewing the issues, Mr. Lloyd determined that the Chedoke site was not a site they wished to explore any further. Since that meeting Mr. Lloyd has found another site in the downtown core for the proposed squash facility.

The background and feasibility information on the Chedoke Golf Course site provided to Mr. Lloyd included:
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1. Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) – the site falls within the jurisdiction of the NEC. Any changes to the existing footprint would necessitate an extensive approval process without any guarantee of success.

2. Site constraints – There is little or no room to expand the clubhouse to accommodate an addition. The current facility is bound by the roadway to the west, the escarpment to the south, the golf course to the north and the site septic bed to the east. It should be noted the site service capacity is severely limited in water supply and sewage to support an expansion of this nature.

3. The septic bed is in the general area identified by the group as a possible location. The septic bed precludes any foundation work for a potential addition. There is no immediate plan to change the septic system. Connecting to City services is not an option based on capacity issues within the City system. There is no area to relocate the septic bed without impacting the golf course.

4. Parking Lot – City Zoning may require the current parking lot to be increased encroaching on the green space and will also be subject to NEC approval further complicating a suggested new squash facility.

5. The financial costs associated with adding a squash facility is difficult to assess without a feasibility study. Budget and cost estimating requires a business approach by the group proposing the new squash facility. In order for staff to derive associated cost estimates, a business plan outlining the needs and requirements as well as an underlying operational model, are a prerequisite. In the absence of such data, staff is unable to go any further in providing the associated costs.

Trends in Squash

Staff also reviewed the trends in squash and squash court facilities across the province to assist Mr. Lloyd. Trends indicate that squash participation has fallen to one quarter of where it was in the 1980’s. Baby boomers remain loyal to the game but there are less young adults and children choosing squash. Squash facilities are best integrated into multi-purpose facilities with gymnasiums, swimming pools and community space rather than a stand alone facility.

Mr. Lloyd appreciated the efforts of staff and requested no further follow up at this time.

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Vicki Woodcox
Acting General Manager
Community Services Department