**Dear Residents of Country Hill Estates**

As your volunteer association of community representatives (CHEA – Country Hill Estates Association), we are writing to provide you with an important update relative to our ongoing advocacy with the City.

Affected homeowners of Country Hill Estates will soon be receiving a letter from the City of Ottawa outlining an offer of financial compensation for select homeowners in lieu of completing their street-facing ditches. Owners will have until March 31, 2023 to agree to the offer (Councillor Darouze recently brought forth an amendment to the motion to extend the time period to 90 days once residents have received their letter).

This compensation is the result of a Motion supported, created, sponsored and brought forward by our local City Councillor, George Darouze, that was passed at a City of Ottawa Council Meeting held on June 22, 2022.

The City’s offer is limited to those who own in Phase 2, provided their property was originally purchased prior to 2008, regardless of whether ownership has since changed. Please find the affected addresses at the bottom of this notice. Additional information is also available on the Country Hill Estate website <http://countryhillestates.ca/> and Facebook page.

**Why will some residents receive this offer, but others will not?**

The original Country Hill Estates Development Agreement from the early 1990s was specific to not only the sale and development of lots, but also the finished amenities for the community (e.g. ditches). Some of these provisions were not completed by the original developer nor by the City when they took over the development.

Specifically, as part of the original development Agreement, the street-facing ditches throughout all of Country Hill were to be completed by the developer to a specific grooming specification as outlined in the development agreement with the City. Basically, this meant removal of overgrowth, addition of top soil and seeding to help ensure that the homeowner could then more easily maintain the ditch.

Phase 1 lots (which is the area of our Community closest to 8th Line) have completed ditches. (Note: for further definition of the different Phases as well as the original Agreement please see the Resources section of the CHEA web page). However, as Phase 2 development progressed years ago, the ditches were no longer being completed by the developer. Then in 2008, the City accepted a proposal from the developer (full wording can be found on our web site) which outlined that based on grade and soil type, ditches in Phase 2 and future Phase 3 development would not have to be finished equal to the standards outlined in the original Agreement.

CHEA has long advocated on your behalf with the City for completion of all the ditches as outlined in the original Agreement. However, after several meetings and correspondence it only very recently became known that the 2008 change had been made.

As a result of our advocacy, and the partnership/support of Councillor Darouze, the City Council has now officially acknowledged and approved the motion to offer compensation to the owners of those Phase 2 properties that were purchased prior to the 2008 change (full text available on the CHEA Web Page).

**What the Proposal/Motion means for affected homeowners**

Homeowners in Phase 2 whose properties were originally purchased before 2008, will each receive a one-time compensation offer based on a set formula ($85 per metre of frontage on their Street) from the City. The specific details of accepting or declining the offer will be outlined in the City’s correspondence, but as we currently understand it, acceptance will require the homeowner to sign-off which will serve to absolve the City of any future claims on the completion of their ditches. Please note, the choice to decide on the City’s offer is individual to each homeowner.

The intention is that the compensation will largely compensate the current homeowner for the cost of having the ditch cleared, topsoil added and seeded, or effectively reimburse them for the work if already done. Upon acceptance, it will then be up to the homeowner to decide if they wish to have their ditch completed or not, and make arrangements to have the work done (the work can be done by themselves or they may contract a professional company). As we understand it, work permits are not required for basic clean up, topsoiling and seeding of your ditch. However, homeowners should always consult the City, especially if any additional work outside of the completion of the ditches is being contemplated, such as culvert replacement and grading changes would still require permits. CHEA is doing some research to see if we can find a reputable company to undertake such work, with the goal being that if homeowners each use the same service provider, all will benefit from the economies of scale that will accrue. Please visit the FB or website for CHEA for more information on this as it evolves, we will post in both spots.

Please note, it is the responsibility of each individual homeowner as to whether they decide to accept the City’s offer. The offer is not dependent on 100% acceptance. Homeowners may decline the offer of compensation should they wish, in which case it is our understanding that the City will then consider the matter closed.

CHEA is still trying to get confirmation from the City, specifically as it pertains to the maintenance of the ditches of owners who do not accept the City’s offer.

**What about Phase 3 and why 2008?**

From the City’s June 8th Motion, the date of 2008 represents when “The City formally accepted gravel and stone ditches in the second phase of development in accordance with Ontario Provincial Standard Drawing 205.050 due to rocky conditions and concerns related to potential erosion of topsoil within the ditches”

Some of Phase 2, and all of Phase 3 development which took place after 2008 are therefore no longer bound by the original 1990s Agreement. Thereby, ineligible for the noted compensation being offered to those Phase 2 owners whose properties were purchased prior to the change.

**Next Steps/ More Information**

As previously indicated, property owners will have until March 31, 2023 to agree to the offer (Councillor Darouze recently, brought forth and amendment to the motion to extend the time period to 90 days once residents have received their letter). As such, a Community Meeting is being planned for the New Year where Country Hill Estates residents can get together to discuss this and the Council’s other approval during their June 22nd meeting pertaining to proceed with the planned park off Iveson near to John Quinn with Councillor Darouze and City of Ottawa legal counsel. Please consult our website or Facebook page for more details as they develop. Alternatively, you can email the Association at cheageneral@gmail.com if ever you have a questions.

If you would like to get involved and join the Association Board, we would love to hear from you. The CHEA Board of Directors election will be an opportunity to formally join the Board. We are stronger with more voices. We also invite everyone to email the Association at cheageneral@gmail.com if ever you have a question.

We look forward to working with all homeowners in Country Hill,

CHEA Board

Impacted Homes (addresses taken from the Motion)

Eligible lots will be located between:

 7860 to 8120 Iveson Drive (Inclusive)  1600 to 1704 Whiteside Way (Inclusive)

 1599 to 1655 Loney Cres. (Inclusive)   1610 to 1627 Ira Morgan Way (Inclusive)

 Country Hill Estates Web Page: http://countryhillestates.ca/

 Facebook Page: https://m.facebook.com/CountryHillEstates/

 Email: cheageneral@gmail.com