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PETERBOROUGH REGION

Pickleball courts will drive the senior residents 'bananas' says organizer of protest

Concerned residents gathered on Saturday, May 18 to protest the Bonnerworth Park pickleball development

By Metroland Staff

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Clifford Skarstedt Metroland

Organizer Father Leo Coughlin, a retired priest, addresses more than 250 concerned residents attending a rally to save Peterborough's Bonnerworth Park on Saturday May 18. A 16-court pickleball development is planned for the park.



More than 250 concerned residents attended a rally at Bonnerworth Park in Peterborough on Saturday to protest the development of a 16-court pickleball project.



Organizer Father Leo Coughlin, a retired priest, addresses more than 250 concerned residents attending a rally to save Peterborough’s Bonnerworth Park on Saturday May 18. A 16-court pickleball development is planned for the park.

Clifford Skarstedt Metroland

The protest was organized by Father Leo Coughlin, a retired priest who lives in Marycrest at Inglewood Seniors’ Residence, located across the street from the park.

He said in an interview that the noise he expects to be generated from the pickleball courts will drive the senior residents “bananas,” and that they aren’t happy about losing their green space.



More than 250 concerned residents attended a rally to save Peterborough's Bonnerworth Park on Saturday May 18. A 16-court pickleball development is planned for the park.

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The pickleball plan calls for the redevelopment of the park, which is located on McDonnel Street and Monaghan Road. Peterborough councillors voted in a meeting April 8 to go ahead with the plan — this, despite some residents' concerns.

While pickleball players are happy with the plan, many neighbours have said they were never consulted — and that the courts will pave over much of the park's green space.

Bonnerworth Park currently has four tennis courts, a 20-year-old skateboard facility, two ball diamonds and green space.



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City council is planning a \$4.4-million redevelopment of the park in 2024 and 2025 that will see it transformed. Under the plan, the ball diamonds won't be replaced, but the tennis courts are relocating to Knights of Columbus Park (on Park Street North), and the pickleball courts there will move to Bonnerworth.



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The pickleball courts are expected to go under construction first this coming fall, and then in 2025, the city plans to expand the existing skateboard area, plus add a specialized new bike track.

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