

THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF MISSISSIPPI MILLS

STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 17, 2022

TO: Committee of the Whole

FROM: Tiffany MacLaren, Community Economic & Cultural Coordinator

SUBJECT: Festival Parades

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Committee of the Whole approve staff working with the Celtfest and Puppets Up! Festival Committees to plan safe parade routes for 2022.

BACKGROUND:

Celtfest is a fun weekend of Ottawa Valley and Celtic entertainment, performed in the natural amphitheater of Gemmill Park in the heart of Almonte. For 2022 the event is July 2 & 3. It is a time to share the historical Celtic traditions with today's local performers.

The organizing committee's mission is to celebrate and promote the Celtic heritage of the Ottawa Valley through music and dance and to make this accessible to all. It is a free event with a number of entertainers who have a Celtic quality, as well as a wide variety of vendors of Celtic goods.

Celtfest began in 1997. 2021 would have been the 25th Anniversary of the event. To mark the significant milestone, they were planning a special anniversary parade. Pandemic restrictions prevented the organizers from making this a reality. They would like to include a parade in the 2022 festival plans. Their intent is that this parade will not only celebrate the anniversary of Celtfest and its ability to be a sustainable festival, but also it's longest serving volunteer, Gavin Donnelly.

The committee plans to ask Gavin's wife to serve as parade marshal and ensure that Gavin's service and dedication to the festival and the town is recognized.

Puppets Up! Is a local festival that was held in the downtown of Almonte and ran for 12 years with its last festival taking place in 2016. The event is returning this summer in a revised location along Reserve St. to accommodate the downtown Almonte construction.

One highlight of the annual Puppets Up! Festival was the daily parade down Mill St. The parade was full of puppets, people, and lively music. The festival site was open to the

public and the parades daily were free activities for everyone to enjoy. Puppets Up! Parades were always very well attended. For 2022 the festival is taking place August 12&13 the committee plans to avoid Mill St. and would like to run their parade on a proposed new route.

DISCUSSION:

Summer 2022 Mississippi Mills is finally coming out of the pandemic with provincial restrictions having been lifted. The community is looking forward to the return of our traditional festivals and events.

The Downtown Almonte Revitalization Construction project has also begun. This construction will have an impact on businesses and events. Continuing to accommodate events like Celfest and Puppets Up! will help attract visitors and local families to the downtown area despite construction mess and delays. This type of activity will help our businesses survive this period.

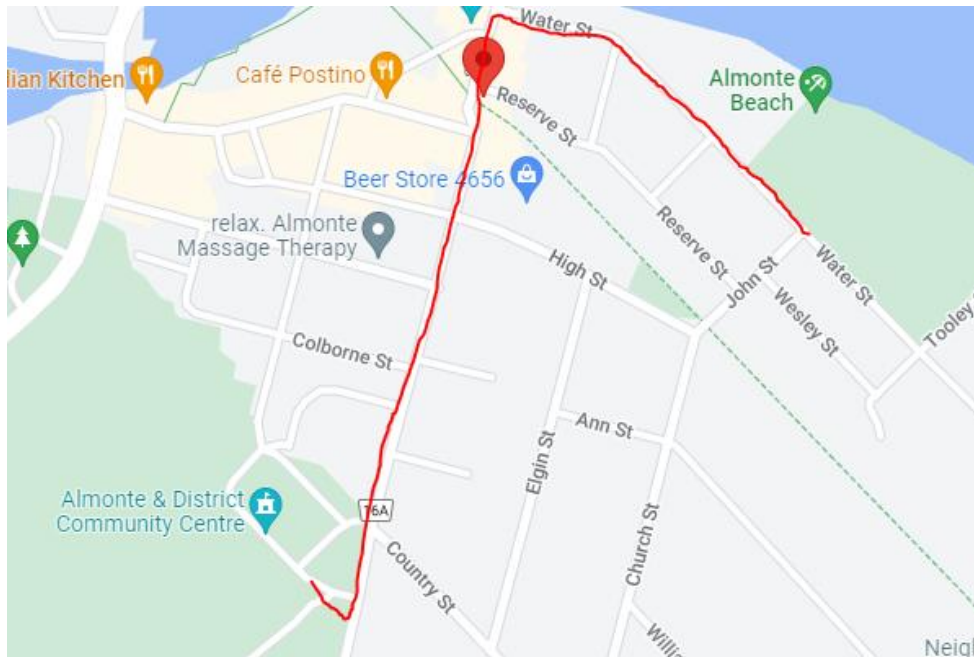
For both events the festival committees will work with Municipal staff to ensure a proper traffic plan is in place. They will be responsible for coordinating volunteers to place and stand with barricades throughout the parade. Recreation staff will drop off barricades in advance.

Committees will also be responsible for distributing notices to residents and businesses along the parade route. Staff will also assist volunteers by ensuring emergency services have been notified. Staff will include road closure notices in our municipal Metroland block ad, on the community digital sign and on the Mississippi Mills website.

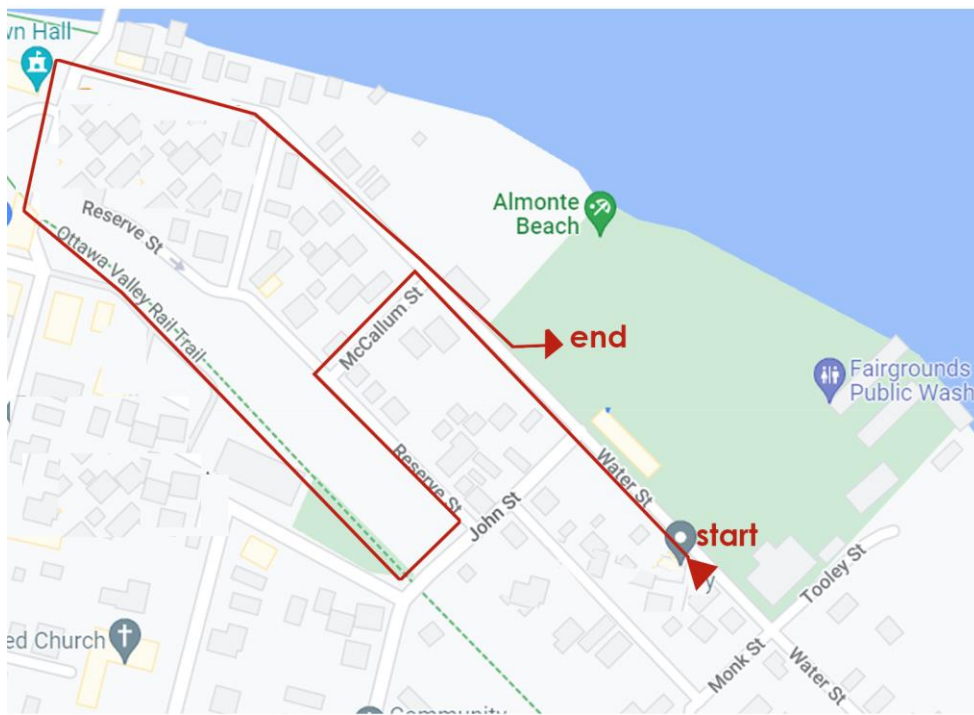
The Public Works Department has been consulted and is comfortable with the 2022 Celfest and Puppets Up! parade routes as proposed.

Both proposed parade routes include County Rd. Puppets Up! also includes a portion of the OVRT. They will need to get a Special Event Permit from Lanark County. Committees have been made aware this step is required.

Celfest proposed route would start at the Almonte Fairgrounds, head down Water Street to Bridge St. Take Bridge St. to the Almonte Community Centre and end behind the facility where the festival is located.



Puppets Up! proposed parade route is to leave the Almonte Fairgrounds, travel down Water St. to McCallum St., turn left on McCallum to Reserve St. Left on Reserve to John St. and then right on John to the OVRT turn right off OVRT onto Bridge St. and right again on Water St. back to the Fair Grounds. This would allow the parade to circle their event space.



FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications of these requests.

SUMMARY:

Staff recommend that the Committee of the Whole authorize Celtfest and Puppets Up! to hold parades as part of their 2022 events and that staff be permitted to work with them to ensure the public is properly notified and any traffic implications are organized safely.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tiffany MacLaren,
Community Economic &
Cultural Coordinator

Reviewed by:

Ken Kelly,
Chief Administrative Officer