

Youth Soccer, Minor Hockey join Sport Aurora

By Brock Weir

As Aurora took its next steps to develop the Sports Plan, lawmakers saw challenges ahead in getting the Town's three biggest sports groups – the Aurora Youth Soccer Club, Aurora Minor Hockey Association, and Sport Aurora – all on the same page.

But the plan's approval spurred dialogue and now the Big Three, representing thousands of athletes from Aurora and beyond, and the majority of local sports groups, have now come under the Sport Aurora fold.

Sport Aurora announced Tuesday that the Aurora Minor Hockey Association (AMHA) and Aurora Youth Soccer Club (AYSC) had joined their organization to present a stronger sporting voice within the local community.

“Open communication between the leadership of all three organizations over the last few months has led both these two significant sport providers to once again become contributing members of Sport Aurora,” said the group in a statement.

Added Sport Aurora president Stephen Kimmerer: “On behalf of the Board of Sport Aurora, I would like to welcome AYSC and AMHA back on board. These two major players in sport delivery in Aurora have a long positive impact on this community, and working together with Sport Aurora for the common good of this town only makes sense moving ahead. We look forward to succeeding together with, and on behalf of, all our members, in accomplishing much for Aurora through sport and recreation.”

Similar sentiments were offered by Jimmy Brennan, executive director of the AYSC, who said they felt it was “the right time moving forward” as both soccer and hockey, as well as sport in general, continue to grow in Aurora.

“We just felt with all the organizations we could become a bigger voice and hopefully we can facilitate a lot of our needs; we need to continue to improve the game and the development of sport and these young kids through soccer,” said Mr. Brennan. “There has been quite a bit of talk about the sports plan in Town and we wanted to become a part of it and help what is going on.

“We're looking to create a better environment for our players here in our organization, as is hockey, as is swimming, as is rugby. We felt coming to the table, this would not only benefit us, but as we are one of the biggest groups in Town, we can help others as well as ourselves.”

The AMHA also says joining Sport Aurora will provide a louder voice overall on the needs of sport in this community.

“There was a great conversation with Steve, Roy Cohen (of the AYSC) and myself and we felt the importance of being a part of Sport Aurora to be a puzzle piece to help out with community sports planning,” said AMHA president Joe Bentolila, noting the needs of the AMHA extends beyond facilities. “We just felt it is time to be a part of a solution and an assistance rather than be a burden. Why aren't the two large sport groups in Aurora involved in Sport Aurora?”