Agenda – Executive Policy Committee – November 30, 2005

REPORTS

Item No. 10 Request for Funding - Save Our Seine River Environment Inc.
File FG-1.1(S)

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 22, 2005, the Riel Community Committee recommended to the Executive Policy Committee that Save our Seine River Environment Inc.'s request for funding to offset the cost of engaging a consultant to undertake the design of a canoe launch/landing prototype be forwarded to the Access Advisory Committee for consideration.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 22, 2005, the Riel Community Committee passed the following motion, namely:

> WHEREAS the Riel Community Committee endorses the future construction of canoe launches/landings by Save Our Seine River Environment Inc. (SOS) along waterways located within the City of Winnipeg;
>
> AND WHEREAS the Riel Community Committee supports SOS's request for funding to offset the cost of engaging a consultant to undertake the design of a canoe launch/landing prototype;
>
> AND WHEREAS SOS's request for funding does not meet the criteria of the City of Winnipeg Community Incentive Grant Program;
>
> AND WHEREAS upon completion of the design, the Riel Community Committee is prepared to offset a portion of the capital costs of constructing the canoe launch/landing prototype;
>
> THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that SOS's request for funding be forwarded to the Riverbank Management Committee and Access Advisory Committee for consideration,

and forwarded to the Executive Policy Committee and Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development for favourable consideration.

Save Our Seine
River Environment Inc.



November 1st 2005

Councillors Gord Steeves, Franco Magnifico and Justin Swandel
Riel Community Committee

Dear Councillors:

Re: Canoe Launch/Landing - Seine and LaSalle Rivers

SOS is very pleased to announce that the 2005 Seine River Greenway map, produced in celebration of our organization's 15th anniversary, will be released to the public within the next few weeks. This map will help to highlight the unique environmental, historical and culture features of this urban watershed.

In preparing for the launch of the map, and based on recent discussions with the community, we believe the greenway map will serve another important role.... it will act as a catalyst for increased recreational opportunities and community stewardship projects in 2006.

To that end, the SOS Board of Directors would like to engage a consultant to undertake the design of a canoe launch/landing followed by the installation of a prototype. The goal of this project would be to obtain a standard design, which could then be applied to both the Seine and LaSalle waterways. We are requesting the support of the Riel Community Committee for this new and exciting initiative.

SOS's reason for pursuing this river enhancement project is two fold. Firstly, one of SOS's goals is to improve appropriate public access along the Seine River by low-impact nature trail and by canoe. Secondly, this project would fulfill a vision of the City of Winnipeg, as described in Plan 2020:

> Promote the Use of Rivers and Riverbanks: "*The City shall promote the use of rivers and riverbanks by facilitating public access to rivers and riverbank lands and encouraging the use of Winnipeg rivers for transportation and recreation through the provision of boat launches, docks and other accessibility improvements.*"
>
> Winnipeggers "*want to enjoy the city's waterways and have access to an abundance of green spaces and natural areas throughout the City*".

Promoting Vitality and Culture: *"The City shall promote active living by encouraging community leadership for active living through training and support of volunteers in collaboration with key stakeholders"*.

The upside to this initiative is great:

Natural Asset and Recreational Resource: The 26 km Seine River greenway corridor in Winnipeg is an attractive paddling destination for both residents and visitors alike. The urban Seine River offers up to 12 hours of paddling without ever leaving the City, and shorter trips are limitless. In fact, on his website, Councillor Steeves recommends paddling the Seine as one of the top ten things to do in St. Vital! Both the LaSalle and Seine rivers are scenic, shallow, sheltered and safe. Both waterways are great for either beginners or experienced canoeists looking for a quick getaway, and the opportunity for wildlife viewing is phenomenal. Did you know that over 30 mammals and 150 bird species have been recorded on the Seine River Greenway?

Minimize Damage to Riparian Habitat: SOS encourages paddling because it is a great way to explore our urban riverbottom forests, and when done properly, it has zero impact on the environment. However, putting a canoe in the water and later taking it out can often do harm to the sensitive shoreline. Since some locations are more accessible than others, paddlers will often depart and arrive from the same place repeatedly, thereby increasing the negative impact and disturbance.

Improve Accessibility: SOS wishes to include all members of society who desire to paddle the Seine, by making access safe and suitable. It is SOS's intention to have mobility challenged and otherwise impaired persons able to access the Seine and LaSalle and enjoy the urban paddling experience.

Clearly, a suitable design for a standard canoe launch/landing would require significant research in order to be considered for implementation. It would need to fit with the physical shoreline attributes of both the Seine and LaSalle waterways. Engineering principles would be employed to ensure the best design, durability and the lowest possible maintenance (i.e. not needing seasonal installation or removal of a dock system). In addition, the structure will need to be environmentally friendly. We have already made some preliminary enquiries, and are aware of several candidates who have the necessary expertise and professional qualifications required to undertake this design project.

The process itself would include community consultation with target users such as Paddle Manitoba, Northern Soul Wilderness Adventures, Independent Living Resource Centre, and other community organizations. In addition, governing agencies such as Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Navigable Waters, Coast Guard, Manitoba Water Stewardship, Manitoba Conservation, City Riverbank Committee, City Riverbank Management

Engineer etc would be consulted to ensure that the design met all requirements and proposed locations investigated. Cost of the final design, materials and installation would be considered throughout the process.

SOS would like to respectfully request $7,500 from the Riel Community Committee. We believe that this amount of $2,500 per Councillor is a very worthwhile investment for the community, one that offers a great return to the neighbourhoods of St. Boniface, St. Vital and St. Norbert. As always, SOS's volunteer Board is committed to pursuing other funding opportunities to ensure that this project reaches fruition and most importantly timely installation.

SOS would be very pleased to meet with you to discuss this innovative project in more detail, and answer any questions you may have. I can be reached at 470-9247 or E-mail ddanyluk7@yahoo.com

Thank you for your support.

David J. Danyluk
SOS Coordinator

Cc Beverley Sawchuk, SOS Volunteer President
Harry Lazarenko, Chairperson - Riverbank Committee
John Kiernan, Property, Planning & Development
Marc Petit, City Clerk