Minutes - Executive Policy Committee - January 30, 2008

REPORTS

Minute No. 141 Preliminary Opportunities Analysis on the Removal of the CPR North End Rail Yards (Point Douglas and Mynarski Wards) File ST-6

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee requested the Mayor's Trade Council to undertake a preliminary opportunities analysis on:

(a) relocation of the CPR North End Rail Yards; and
(b) rail line consolidation of tracks of both CN and CP Rail;

keeping within the current jurisdiction of the City of Winnipeg, and identifying the roles and responsibilities of the private railways, provincial and federal governments.

Further, the Executive Policy Committee recommended to Council:

1. That the Council Motion of January 23, 2008, be received as information, inasmuch as the Mayor's Trade Council has been requested to undertake a preliminary opportunities analysis on the relocation of the CPR North End Rail Yards.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Wyatt,

That the Mayor's Trade Council be requested to undertake a preliminary opportunities analysis on:

(a) relocation of the CPR North End Rail Yards; and
(b) rail line consolidation of tracks of both CN and CP Rail;

keeping within the current jurisdiction of the City of Winnipeg, and identifying the roles and responsibilities of the private railways, provincial and federal governments.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Wyatt,

That the Council Motion of January 23, 2008, be received as information, inasmuch as the Mayor's Trade Council has been requested to undertake a preliminary opportunities analysis on the relocation of the CPR North End Rail Yards, and forwarded to Council.

Carried

Pat Martin, Member of Parliament, Winnipeg Centre, House of Commons, submitted a communication dated January 29, 2008, in support of a Preliminary Opportunities Analysis on the Removal of the CPR North End Rail Yards, including a copy of a Winnipeg Free Press article dated January 21, 2008 titled "The case for rail relocation".

COUNCIL DECISION:

On January 23, 2008, Council ruled automatic referral of the following motion to the Executive Policy Committee:

Moved by Councillor Vandal,
Seconded by Councillor Gerbasi,

WHEREAS the CPR Rail Yards have dissected the north end of Winnipeg for over 100 years;

AND WHEREAS there would substantial housing, commercial, recreational and transportation opportunities for Winnipeg if the CPR Rail yards could be relocated or rationalized outside of the city;

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION (continued):

AND WHEREAS there may be national transportation opportunities for Manitoba in the development of a modern inland port / container terminal which would complement the Asia-Pacific Gateway Initiative and / or Port of Churchill initiatives;

AND WHEREAS the Federal government have enacted the "Railway Relocation and Crossing Act" which facilitates the relocation of railway lines or re-routing of railway traffic in urban areas;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that a preliminary opportunities analysis on the removal of the CPR North End Rail Yards be undertaken by the City of Winnipeg;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Winnipeg consult with both CPR and the Province of Manitoba on this initiative.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
OTTAWA, CANADA
K1A 0A6

Pat Martin, MP

January 29, 2008

Mayor Sam Katz and Members of
Executive Policy Committee (EPC)
Council Building
2nd floor
510 Main Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 1B9

Dear Mayor Katz and Members of EPC:

Re: CP Rail Yards

I understand that at your meeting tomorrow morning you may be considering a motion from City Council with regard to the possible relocation or removal of the CP Rail Yards from Winnipeg's inner city. While prior commitments prevent me from appearing as a delegation at your meeting, I did want to share my thoughts on this initiative with you as you contemplate an appropriate role for the City of Winnipeg to take on it.

Recently I wrote an article which was published in the *Winnipeg Free Press* on January 21, 2008 with the headline "The case for rail relocation" (attached is a copy of this article for ease of reference). While in this article I outline some of the inner city revitalization advantages inherent in having the marshalling yards relocated, I also emphasize that from a bigger perspective, a good business case may well be made for why these yards might better serve the region were they relocated and upgraded as part of a national initiative to improve Canada's competitive advantage with regard to the transportation of manufactured goods and commodities.

I believe that the report on the *Asia Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative* to The Honourable David Emerson, Minister of International Trade, which was presented to the Minister and released to the public last week reinforces the point that such a business case may well exist. Among other things, this report, which was co-authored by Art DeFehr of Winnipeg-based Palliser Furniture, recommends that serious consideration be given to "the development of a system of inland terminals".

Suffice it for now to say that there seems to be a real opportunity for community leaders (from both the public and private sectors) in our city and province to work together to develop and implement a strategy which could have a huge impact on the future of Winnipeg and the capital region. I would encourage the City of Winnipeg to take a lead role to encourage discussions with the other two orders of government, the private sector and the railway companies toward this end.

Yours truly,



Pat Martin, MP
Winnipeg Centre

Encl.

Monday, January 21st, 2008

Winnipeg Free Press LIVE

The case for rail relocation

Mon Jan 21 2008

By Pat Martin

FROM an urban planning point of view, there's a host of good reasons to relocate the CPR marshalling yards. There have been spills, derailments, and explosions many times over the years. It has been an ongoing challenge to build and maintain expensive bridges, underpasses, and dangerous level crossings.

And we desperately need the land for new housing, more green space, and new and better recreation facilities in the inner city.

But there are compelling business and economic reasons to move the tracks as well and I believe we are presented at this point in time with a realistic but finite window of opportunity .

There is a nationwide rationalization of our rail transportation system that is both complementary to, and driven by, the Asia-Pacific Gateway initiative. The shipping container has revolutionized freight and it is both cost-efficient and smart for the environment to get that freight off the trucks and back onto the rails for as much of its journey as possible.

If Winnipeg wants to exploit its geographic advantage as the centre of North America, and expand its strength as a transportation and distribution hub for the continent, then we need to develop and promote a modern, state-of-the-art, inland container terminal and sorting yards, supported by the best rail and trucking services possible. I have visited such modern container terminals in Jakarta, Singapore, Vietnam and China, and believe me, they don't look anything like the CPR marshalling yards in the centre of Winnipeg.

To claim a key role in this nation-wide transportation strategy, Winnipeg needs an inland sorting terminal on a scale that can efficiently and quickly accommodate the flow of

millions of shipping containers a year coming in through the gateways that are being developed. And we need to choose a location where there is plenty of land for long-term development, well outside the city.

While there is fierce competition from other centres to be the location for such a "great inland port," I think Winnipeg is well-positioned, especially if our plan includes a strategy to use the Winnipeg sorting terminal to fill empty containers going back across the Pacific with commodities for export. The trains will stop here if they have reason to get revenue, and if they are not held up for too long or "bottle-necked" in obsolete inner-city rail yards.

The argument for inner-city revitalization, however virtuous, may never be enough to get the rail yards moved out of the city. And the Asia Pacific Gateway in and of itself, may not justify such a move. But the two interests combined, coupled with some vision to reclaim our position as the distribution hub for North America and a plan to capture return traffic of containers filled with Canadian export commodities, gives some hope that this is an idea whose time has come.

If Winnipeg wants to pursue this opportunity it needs to involve the railways early in the discussions so they can help shape the plan rather than approach it defensively.

We need to encourage and facilitate the co-operation and sharing of lines and operations by CN and CP to get them both out of the city.

I believe relocating the rail lines could be an important catalyst for Winnipeg in terms of economic development, inner-city revitalization, and strengthening the overall role of Winnipeg as the key transportation hub for North America.

If we just toss this worthy idea on the "too hard to do" pile, we'll be missing out on a historic opportunity.

Pat Martin is the NDP MP for Winnipeg Centre.