STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 38
Councillor Steeves referenced the post office acquisition and the change in purchase price because of the due diligence process, and requested a short explanation on why; to which Councillor Swandel stated he was not provided with the specifics, but believed that there were structural issues that needed to be remediated.

Councillor Steeves referenced the sale of Winnipeg Square Parkade and the dates surrounding the sale and questioned if the deal would be lost as a result of a delay in considering the item; to which Councillor Swandel stated he did not think the deal would be lost.

Councillor Gerbasi noted the refusal to commit the Winnipeg Square Parkade sale proceeds to the downtown and asked the Chairperson if he was willing to make any changes to that.

Councillor Swandel stated that the recommendation was that the monies be held in the Special Operating Agency (SOA), which oversees parking assets. He noted that Council approves the SOA's business plan annually, and nothing could be done with the proceeds until Council had the parking authority's business plan. Councillor Swandel further stated that he believed the proceeds should be used downtown.

His Worship Mayor Katz questioned if the Chairperson would like a special meeting of Council to deal with the sale of the Winnipeg Square Parkade, he would be more than happy to call one.

Councillor Swandel advised that a special meeting would be appropriate and stated that sooner was better.

Councillor Orlikow requested that when a date was decided upon, that the public have an opportunity to come forward and voice their concerns.

Councillor Swandel stated the issue had been out in public long enough and that Council had been briefed on the type of decision they as leaders needed to make in the best interest of the public.

Councillor Thomas rose on a point of order noting that Council had the right to call notice if sufficient notice had not been given.

Councillor Swandel replied that waiting 96 hours to get something done in the downtown was fine with him.

Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development - Question Period (continued):

Councillor Vandal stated that if you really wanted to finance another parkade in the Exchange District, that the value of the Winnipeg Square Parkade was such that you could start today.

Councillor Swandel replied that he was a firm believer that the City should only be in the parking business when appropriate, such as when needed to stimulate the downtown, which was the reason the City built the Winnipeg Square Parkade. He further suggested that other areas now needed stimulation.

Councillor Vandal stated that equity and cash flow were like cash.

Councillor Swandel replied that when there was an opportunity, it was important to seize it to be able to have monies for economic development. He stated that the opportunity was there to undertake something great for our city in the future.

His Worship advised that it appeared there were many Councillors ready to debate the Winnipeg Square Parkade Sale issue immediately, to which Councillor Swandel questioned if he should ask for a special meeting of Council today.

His Worship advised that would call a special meeting of Council for 1:30 p.m.