Minutes - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development - April 8, 2003

REPORTS

Minute No. 231 Government of Canada's Historic Places Initiative
File G-3.1.5 (Vol. 3)

STANDING COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development received as information the report dated March 24, 2003, from the Historical Buildings Committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development concurred in the recommendation of the Historical Buildings Committee and recommends to Council:

1. That the City of Winnipeg strongly urge the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Canadian Heritage to reconsider the financial incentive mechanism and to adopt a tax credit system similar to the U.S. model as a more effective means of stopping the continuing demolition and neglect of Canada's heritage buildings.

2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things to implement the intent of the foregoing.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Eadie,

That the report dated March 24, 2003, from the Historical Buildings Committee be received as information.

Carried

Moved by Councillor De Smedt,

That the recommendation of the Historical Buildings Committee be concurred in, namely, the City of Winnipeg strongly urge the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Canadian Heritage to reconsider the financial incentive mechanism and to adopt a tax credit system similar to the U.S. model as a more effective means of stopping the continuing demolition and neglect of Canada's heritage buildings,

and forwarded to Executive Policy Committee and Council.

Carried

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 20, 2003, the Historical Buildings Committee moved the following motion, namely:

WHEREAS, the Government of Canada in its February 25, 2003 budget announced the commitment of $10 million per year for 3 years for financial incentives for historic preservation for the Historic Places Initiative;

AND WHEREAS, the City of Winnipeg considers a system of tax credits for historic rehabilitation to be a more effective and substantial mechanism for stimulating the preservation and rehabilitation of Canada's heritage buildings;

AND WHEREAS, the City of Winnipeg in correspondence in 2001 to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Canadian Heritage, expressed its support for the work of the Historic Places Initiative and urged the Government of Canada to join with local municipalities and the provinces to implement 1) a system of long-term ongoing Federal tax credits for costs incurred in the rehabilitation of designated heritage buildings, and 2) initiate a long-term ongoing Goods and Services Tax rebate paid on goods, materials, services and labour in the rehabilitation of designated heritage buildings;

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

AND WHEREAS, $10 million for heritage grants spread across Canada is woefully inadequate to address the needs for heritage preservation in this country;

AND WHEREAS, the City of Winnipeg, through the CentreVenture Development Corporation has offered over $3.5 million in tax credits and $1.0 million in grants since the year 2000;

AND WHEREAS, the Winnipeg City Council, on its own, through the City's heritage conservation incentive programs has provided over $36 million in grants and tax credits since 1995;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED;

That the City of Winnipeg congratulates the Government of Canada for its first commitment of financial resources to address the loss of Canada's heritage buildings;

NONETHELESS;

That the City of Winnipeg considers the current proposal of $10 million for financial incentives for the Historic Places Initiative to be woefully inadequate; and,

THEREFORE,

The City of Winnipeg strongly urges the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Canadian Heritage to reconsider the financial incentive mechanism and to adopt a tax credit system similar to the U.S. model as a more effective means of stopping the continuing demolition and neglect of Canada's heritage buildings.

March 24, 2003

CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS
STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON
PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

RE: GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S HISTORIC PLACES INITIATIVE

The Historical Buildings Committee, at its meeting on March 20, 2003, discussed the recent announcement by the Government of Canada that a federal credit program for heritage conservation will not be put in place at this time despite the countless efforts of provinces and municipalities across Canada to establish a mechanism for a national register of historic places and numerous meetings on implementing such a national heritage incentive program.

Municipal heritage planners have been working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to have the Federal Government take seriously the urgent need for a strong federal incentive program.

The Historical Buildings Committee recommends that the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development request City Council adopt the following resolution and advise both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Canadian Heritage of the City's deep concern:

WHEREAS, the Government of Canada in its February 25, 2003 budget announced the commitment of $10 million per year for 3 years for financial incentives for historic preservation for the Historic Places Initiative;

AND WHEREAS, the City of Winnipeg considers a system of tax credits for historic rehabilitation to be a more effective and substantial mechanism for stimulating the preservation and rehabilitation of Canada's heritage buildings;

AND WHEREAS, the City of Winnipeg in correspondence in 2001 to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Canadian Heritage, expressed its support for the work of the Historic Places Initiative and urged the Government of Canada to join with local municipalities and the provinces to implement 1) a system of long-term ongoing Federal tax credits for costs incurred in the rehabilitation of designated heritage buildings, and 2) initiate a long-term ongoing Goods and Services Tax rebate paid on goods, materials, services and labour in the rehabilitation of designated heritage buildings;

AND WHEREAS, $10 million for heritage grants spread across Canada is woefully inadequate to address the needs for heritage preservation in this country;
AND WHEREAS, the City of Winnipeg, through the CentreVenture Development Corporation has offered over $3.5 million in tax credits and $1.0 million in grants since the year 2000;

AND WHEREAS, the Winnipeg City Council, on its own, through the City's heritage conservation incentive programs has provided over $36 million in grants and tax credits since 1995;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED;

That the City of Winnipeg congratulates the Government of Canada for its first commitment of financial resources to address the loss of Canada's heritage buildings;

NONETHELESS;

That the City of Winnipeg considers the current proposal of $10 million for financial incentives for the Historic Places Initiative to be woefully inadequate; and,

THEREFORE,

The City of Winnipeg strongly urges the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Canadian Heritage to reconsider the financial incentive mechanism and to adopt a tax credit system similar to the U.S. model as a more effective means of stopping the continuing demolition and neglect of Canada's heritage buildings.

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Councillor Jenny Gerbasi
Chairperson
Historical Buildings Committee

cc: Giles Bugailiskis

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