

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 414

Councillor Smith referred to a report on electronic message centres authorized by the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development on July 5, 2011, and indicated that the City was allowing electronic message centres to not pay a cent to the City. Councillor Smith noted that the electronic message centre at Portage and Main was approved on June 17, 2008 and the City had lost revenue because a revenue formula had not been implemented and questioned how many years the Planning, Property and Development Department would need to deal with the matter.

Councillor Browaty advised that he recently spoke with the Director of Land Use and Planning and the report was imminent. He also stated that he was hopeful that the recommendation from the department would include some enhanced revenue opportunities.

Councillor Smith questioned why it had taken so long to deal with the matter. Councillor Browaty advised that electronic message boards had changed rapidly since 2008 due to technology. He noted that the cost of the big colour full motion signs dropped massively in the last four years. He acknowledged that there was a need to clean up the esthetics of the street and, in his opinion, move away fully and completely from mobile signs and move to electronic message centres. He suggested that the centres were great opportunities for businesses to promote themselves and that the City needed to make sure it was done in a proper, reasonable and balanced way. He suggested that there would be opinions on all sides of the issue and when the report was out there, it would be a good opportunity for all of Council to participate in discussion.

In reference to Parcel 4 and the water park debate, Councillor Gerbasi questioned what the next steps would be to move forward with this important piece of land.

Councillor Browaty advised that the particular parcel of land fell under the Downtown Zoning By-law area and the Chair of the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management, but commented that increased and improved public consultation was something to be embraced.

In reference to a consultation done by River City Connections on what to do with the riverbanks, Councillor Eadie asked the Chair to explain the River City's Connection and how the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development would interface the efforts with the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown, Heritage and Riverbank Management.

Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development – Question Period (continued):

In response, Councillor Browaty stated that anything to do with the development, promotion, preservation and economic opportunities of the riverbanks would fall under the Standing Policy Committee on Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management and any questions on the River City Connection piece should be directed to the Chief Operating Officer who was the City's representative on that particular group.

Councillor Eadie acknowledged the role of the Riverbank Management Committee, but suggested he did not see how that had anything to do with what plans were meant for development. Councillor Browaty noted that the primary function of the former Riverbank Management Committee was dealing with riverbank erosion and preservation, however, in recent times, economic development opportunities as they relate to river ways were brought up, and River City would fall most appropriately under the riverbank portion of the Downtown Development, Heritage and Riverbank Management Committee.