STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 609
Councillor Pagtakhan asked if the Chair was aware that during the Public Hearing of Waverley West there were terms to provide funding to accelerate the provision of affordable housing downtown and in the Inner City.

Councillor Browaty acknowledged that he was made aware by Councillor Swandel earlier that the Province of Manitoba had certain obligations from the Waverley West subdivision in that regard.

Councillor Havixbeck asked for an update on the status of Senior Planner recruitment in the Planning, Property and Development Department.

Councillor Browaty advised that Council only hired the CAO, the CFO, the City Clerk and City Auditor but because the Chief Planner was such a significant role and sets the direction and tone and that it was a matter of interest to all Members of Council, he advised that they were currently reviewing the short list of candidates for interviews in the next two to three weeks.

Councillor Havixbeck inquired when local area planning initiatives would come forward to Council on an annual basis. Councillor Browaty advised that the current directive from the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development was to report annually at the February meeting.

Councillor Havixbeck referred to the new permit process that was implemented in the spring and asked the Chair to provide an update on the status of that new process.

Councillor Browaty stated that the summer months were busier times of year for residential permits and inspections and the waits were getting a little longer than the Department wanted. He added that you do not want to delay commercial and industrial inspections but there were some instances where people were moved from Commercial and Industrial to the Residential side and certain quadrants had longer queues and those were balanced out during the summer months as well.

Councillor Eadie referred to a particular permit issue where a quick amendment was recommended by the Planning Department but when the engineers and architects made the adjustment and re-submitted it to the Permit Department, they were told it would have to go through another six week process to look over the whole plan again. In light of this, Councillor Eadie requested Councillor Browaty to get a report on the new permit system and some of the specific issues and tweaking that might need to be done for that plan.

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

Councillor Browaty advised that earlier this year a process was implemented where the signatures and seals of engineers and architects would be taken as proof that the plans were appropriate. He added that he did not know of the particular case Councillor Eadie referred to but agreed to look into and get a report back on the success of the new program.

Councillor Eadie stated that within the Civil Service Commission there was talk about the public interest being upheld by having Deputy Ministers not entering into what could be perceived or be a conflict with their Minister to ensure the public trust and inquired if Councillor Browaty, as Chair, had trust in the ability of the CAO to do his job.

In response, Councillor Browaty stated that this was not the appropriate venue to discuss personnel matters and added that Council does not have privilege as other legislative bodies have.