STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 242
Councillor Smith referred to the Provencher Pedestrian Bridge and noted he could find no mention of a restaurant in the clause that was passed by Council. He further questioned who approved the expenditure and what it was costing to build the restaurant facility on the Provencher Pedestrian Bridge, to which Councillor Steeves replied that he would endeavour to find out.

Councillor Steek questioned if anyone could advise if the City had a tenant for the restaurant.

Councillor Vandal advised that a process was underway to choose a tenant for the public space on Esplanade Riel.

Councillor Steek noted that the budget press release stated one of the new initiatives in 2005 would be the introduction of garbage fees offset by a reduction in property taxes and questioned if the Chairperson supported the introduction of garbage fees.

Councillor Steeves responded in the affirmative and commented that this Council must be able to come up with a model that would both reduce the amount of solid waste going to the landfill, as well as reduce the amount of money that taxpayers paid to collect solid waste.

Councillor Steek questioned if the Chairperson supported an appropriate and offsetting reduction on the property tax bill.

Councillor Steeves again responded in the affirmative and stated that in his opinion, it would be impossible for the City to implement any type of program that had to do with a polluter pay concept whereby there would not be a financial windfall to the taxpayer.

Councillor Wyatt made reference to the cost overruns on the Provencher Pedestrian Bridge and questioned what portion of the cost overruns were related to the installation of the restaurant, to which Councillor Steeves advised he would endeavour to get the information.

Councillor Steek made reference to the Civic Environmental Committee document titled Sustainable Winnipeg: A Comprehensive Environmental Strategy. He questioned if the Chairperson was supportive of the recommendation that suggests MPIC start charging insurance to users of vehicles based on the mileage they drive, and questioned if there would be exemptions for police and people who use their vehicles on a regular basis.

Councillor Steeves noted that other cities are doing very creative things in terms of discouraging single occupancy vehicles and encouraging people to get on public transit and that the strategy suggests that MPIC look at some of these options.