Minutes – Council – January 25, 2024

Minute No. 129
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development – January 11, 2024

Item No. 1 Purchasing or Expropriating Private Lands to Preserve Forests

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development and adopted the following:

1. That the Chief Administrative Officer be delegated the authority to accept and approve the donation/acquisition of land of a nominal amount from Manitoba Habitat Conservancy, including the approval of terms and conditions of the acquisition and any ancillary costs to the transaction, provided an existing budget is available.

2. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development in 180 days with the required amendments to the Real Estate Framework for the authorization outlined in Recommendation 1, and include any required changes to allow for the future acceptance of land donations and/or acquisitions from other conservation organizations at a nominal cost.

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

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development – January 11, 2024

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Rollins,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development be adopted.

Councillor Rollins called for the yeas and nays, which were as follows:

Yea: His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Chambers, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Orlikow, Rollins, Santos and Sharma 14

Nay: 0

Absent: Councillors Schreyer and Wyatt 2

and the motion was declared carried.

David Grant submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 16, 2024, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On January 11, 2024, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development considered the recommendation of the Riel Community Committee and passed the following motion:

WHEREAS the adoption of OurWinnipeg 2045 council committed to increase the amount public reserve land within the City by 1,000 acres, in addition to the already existing public reserve lands;

AND WHEREAS Council's Executive Policy lead for the Environment and ward Councillor for St. Vital has lobbied other levels of government to secure funding that would allow for the acquisition of highly desirable forested areas;

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

AND WHEREAS the Manitoba Habitat Conservancy ("MHC") has been a beneficiary of said funds and operates as an independent charity that focuses on land conservation;

AND WHEREAS MHC acquires land for the purpose of conservation but seeks partnerships with other levels of government to transfer the acquired land for its long-term preservation;

AND WHEREAS delaying the transfer of land to other governments ultimately increases holding costs to MHC and reduces their ability to deliver on their mandate;

AND WHEREAS Council is currently authorized to approve all land acquisitions programs, as set out in the Acquisition of Property policy;

AND WHEREAS providing authority to the City's Chief Administrative Officer to accept land donations and/or acquisitions at a nominal amount from MHC would be beneficial to both parties;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following be recommended to the Executive Policy Committee and Council:

1. That the Chief Administrative Officer be delegated the authority to accept and approve the donation/acquisition of land of a nominal amount from Manitoba Habitat Conservancy, including the approval of terms and conditions of the acquisition and any ancillary costs to the transaction, provided an existing budget is available.

2. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development in 180 days with the required amendments to the Real Estate Framework for the authorization outlined in Recommendation 1, and include any required changes to allow for the future acceptance of land donations and/or acquisitions from other conservation organizations at a nominal cost.

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

D. Domke, Manager of Parks and Open Spaces, Public Works Department, provided a verbal report on the matter.

Cat Macaulay Gauthier submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

On November 22, 2023, the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development laid over consideration of the recommendation of the Riel Community Committee and directed the Winnipeg Public Service to provide a verbal report in 30 days on opportunities to purchase and/or expropriate private land that is heavily forested or contains an abundance of mature trees.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On November 16, 2023, the Riel Community Committee passed the following motion:

That the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development be requested to direct the Winnipeg Public Service to report back on opportunities to purchase and/or expropriate private land this is heavily forested or contains an abundance of mature trees.