SUBMISSION – JOHN GIAVEDONI

ITEM 2 OF THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED APRIL 16, 2024, REGARDING GARBAGE CLEAN UP AT ENCAMPMENTS

Sent: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 10:59:07 AM

Personal information
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City: Winnipeg
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Delegation information
Committee: Council
Committee - council: Opposed to the recommendations
Committee - other: N/A
Agenda item (number and title): Garbage Clean Up at Encampments

Comments in writing: I took a walk along Fort Douglas Park at Waterfront Drive, to enjoy the serenity of this river-side park in the spring. However, what I saw was an environmental disaster, with piles of garbage, abandoned tents and structures, torched trees and trampled ground devoid of undergrowth.

And for those who have been living in these horrid conditions, this is a human tragedy. Why are we not taking better care of these people?

This is a city park. A Forest Naturalization Area. The encampments all seemed to be abandoned. Why is this not being cleaned up and protected?

The City of Winnipeg Non-Emergent Encampment Support Process (attached to your agenda, as Appendix B), states "Where an encampment has been vacated, Public Works will clean up and remove debris." Clean up of abandoned encampments is your policy but it is not being followed.

I note that in Appendix A - Jurisdictional Analysis, the two examples of Victoria and Halifax, are not examples of what we are seeing on Waterfront Drive. Halifax allows those "sleeping rough to remain in DESIGNATED LOCATIONS until indoor shelter spaces or housing options have been identified." Victoria allows sheltering in DESIGNATED PARKS overnight, but not during the daytime.

In Winnipeg, the encampments along Waterfront Drive have destroyed the forest in the Fort Douglas park, and it is only getting worse.

We too need to designate areas where these encampments can take place, areas where we can not only provide garbage pickup, but clean water, washroom facilities, food, shelter, safety and a sense of dignity.

Leaving these people to live in squalor on the riverbank, but providing once a week garbage pickup is not a solution and only a waste of money and a distraction from what needs to be done. This does nothing to "improve the quality of life." It is a distraction from the big picture.

We are against this proposal and instead want this money, and much more, to go toward finding/creating dignified housing and wrap-around services for the homeless.

It will take a few years for the forest along Waterfront Drive to return to being the beautiful park it once was if action is taken now. But if encampments are allowed to be populated again, it will get worse. And with the weekly fires we experienced last year, it is only time before someone living in those horrid conditions is seriously hurt, or worse.

Think I'm over-reacting? Check out the attached iPhone pictures taken on Saturday April 20th, and think about how you want those who are unfortunate to be treated, and how you want your city parks and forest areas to look.

[the submission system is only allowing one picture; I was hoping to send a few]

“A Walk in the Park”



Does this look like a “Forest Naturalization Area”, protected by City of Winnipeg, Public Works Dept?



Why do we let people live in this squalor?



Trash everywhere, except in the trash receptacles.


The North Winnipeg Parkway, at the intersection with Waterfront Drive, greeting visitors to the Exchange District with a field of trash.



Why is this structure allowed in a City Park, that is full of no camping signs?



Garbage bags and a garbage can plus shopping carts.



A third-world shanty in the middle of our prosperous City.



A shelter made from the branches of the parkland’s trees.



The tall grass and undergrowth is completely trampled.



The view from the walkway along Waterfront in Fort Douglas park — torched trees with no branches, and the ground devoid of vegetation,

This City park and “forest naturalization area” is an environmental disaster and an embarrassment.