

LEMAY FOREST: A TIMELINE OF EVENTS

A Chronology of the Efforts to Protect Lemay Forest



INITIAL PURCHASE AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT PLANS

November 7, 2017

- Mr. Yahyapour purchases the privately owned 22.5 acre land known as Lemay Forest for \$1,537,000.

December 19, 2019

- 10049772 Manitoba Inc. purchases residential lot 823 Lemay Ave for \$345,000. This house backs on to Lemay Forest.

April 2020

- Landmark Planning (hired by the developer) hosts a community meeting.



EARLY ADVOCACY

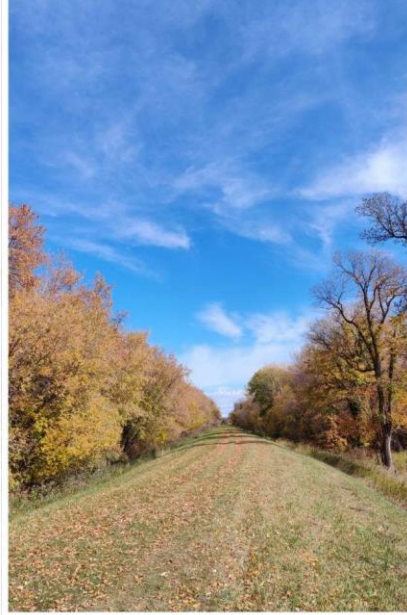
March 2020

- The Coalition to Save Lemay Forest is formed.

October 2021

- Landmark Planning removes the Lemay Forest project from their website.

At this point any updates from the landowner or any hired developers goes quiet.



2023: DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL RESURFACES



August

- The developer submits a proposal for a 2500-unit, 5000-bed assisted living facility, despite a city report saying no policy exists to support such a large-scale development.



October

- Mr. Yahyapour states his interest in selling the land via Mr. Wintrup.
- Residents receive the first of many letters from Tochal Developments Group Inc. (Mr. Wintrup).

December 1

- No trespassing signs are erected at Lemay Forest.



KEY DATES IN LATE 2023

Coalition actions

November

- An online petition is launched.
- The first in person meeting of the Coalition in its current form takes place.
- Coalition members hold their first in person meetings with elected officials.

December

- GoFundMe is launched with a goal of \$5000 (almost double has been raised to date).
- First steps are taken to become a grassroots non-profit.

Government actions

November

- The motion to purchase Lemay Forest is heard by The Riel Community Committee on November 16 and passes with amendments.
- The same motion is heard by The Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development on November 22 and is held over to the next meeting (a decision is made January 2024).



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2024: ACTIVITY RAMPS UP

January 6

- Tochal Developments Group Inc. (Mr. Wintrup) hosts an open house.

February 2

- The Coalition to Save Lemay Forest officially becomes a non-profit.

March

- Funding is secured to acquire the Lemay Forest land. An offer for fair market value \$2,925,000 was made by MHC based on an independent credible appraisal. The offer was not accepted.

April 5

- Easement agreement with the City of Winnipeg is signed for access across city owned at Av. Landry and Rue de la Digue.

May

- An open letter is written by the Coalition to ask Mr. Yahyapour to work together to find a solution that works for everyone.

Summer

- A physical petition is started including a door-knocking campaign and a postcard mailer (over 1200 signatures have been collected).
- The Coalition attends community events including the Winnipeg 150 Celebration in St. Norbert.



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2024: CIVIC AND MUNICIPAL DECISION SUMMARY



Demolition permit for 823 Lemay Ave

The developer applies for a demolition permit of an occupied house to create access to the land-locked Lemay Forest.

- **March 21:** The permit is rejected.
- **May 3:** The decision to deny the demolition permit is upheld during an appeal at the Riel Community Committee.



Subdivision and rezoning application DASZ 9/2024

DASZ is heard and rejected on the following dates:

- **September 6:** Riel Community Committee.
- **September 13:** The Standing Policy Committee.
- **September 17:** The Executive Policy Committee.
- **September 26:** Full Winnipeg City Council.



Municipal Board of Manitoba

The developer applies to the Municipal Board regarding the "Validity of Appeal for Missed Timelines re: DASZ 9/2024.

- **July 12:** Appeal is filed.
- **September 12:** Preliminary hearing takes place.
- **October 8:** Municipal Board rules that appeal is not valid.



TREE REMOVAL IN LATE 2024



September

- The developer enters land and starts forest removal.
- The City of Winnipeg issues a cease and desist.



October

- The City of Winnipeg issues a tree cutting permit.



December 23-27

- The developer enters Lemay Forest via neighbouring private property and destroys one acre of forest.



A SACRED FIRE IS LIT AND IS UNDER IMMEDIATE THREAT

December 27–31, 2024

- An elder lights and blesses a sacred fire on city owned land.
- The developer calls police saying there is a blockade.
- Police come – eight officers, no indigenous liaison, no female officers, no indigenous officers.
- The developer announces through the media that he is filing an injunction to have the blockade removed.

January 6, 2025

- Judge Sarah Inness extends the injunction, however says sacred fire can stay and did not approve the developer's request to order the protesters to leave the sacred fire as long as it isn't a blockade.

January 8, 2025

- The landowner's lawyer sends a letter to Coalition members and others on January 7 that the Lemay Forest will be accessed at 9:30 am.
- Sacred Firekeepers and Elders along with supporters move the firewood pile, tables, equipment, and black truck to create 24 foot clearing for equipment to pass.
- Developer arrives in truck with bobcat on trailer. Protestors block the entrance saying they are waiting for police.



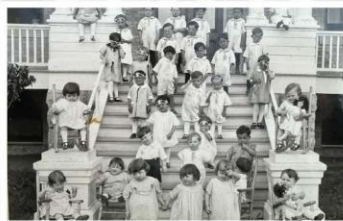
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2025: MORE INFORMATION COMES TO LIGHT AND SUPPORT GROWS



The Wilderness Committee

- **January 8/9:** The Wilderness Committee's "Winnipeg forest razed despite federal species protection laws" press release raises alarm about the protections of the Pileated Woodpecker.
- Grow Nature in Our Neighbourhoods campaign to pressure the Mayor and Premier to designate the Lemay Forest a Heritage Site.
- **February 14:** A fundraiser is launched.



Manitoba Historical Society, Heritage Winnipeg, and The Manitoba Archeological Society

- **January 9:** A joint press release calls for "The Invocation of Manitoba Laws to Stop the Ongoing Deforestation and Disturbance of the Lemay Forest, a significant natural and cultural site."



St. Boniface Historical Society/Société historique de Saint-Boniface

- **February 4:** The SHSB sheds light on the forgotten history of the Ritchot Asylum cemetery through a press release.

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2025: INCREASED PRESSURE FOR PROTECTION

January

- **January 3:** An offer to purchase for \$5.25 million dollars by MHC is extended and ultimately rejected, but not before the developer destroys more forest.
- **January 13:** Councillor Wyatt introduces a motion for consideration and verbal report to rezone and assemble the lands at The Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development. This motion is laid over until March.
- January 8: A private Prosecution is filed against the developer and planner for violating the Cemeteries Act (Section 35).

February

- **January 11-13:** The Municipal Board hearing heard the appeal of the city's rejection of the subdivision and rezoning application.
- Several concerned citizens and advocates speak in support of Lemay Forest.
- **February 13:** The Save Lemay Forest: A 100 Days of Creativity Campaign is launched on Social Media.

March 1

- **March 1:** A community art build is held to celebrate five years of the Coalition.
- **March 6:** The Standing Policy Committee approves a motion to work with stakeholders to assemble and rezone the Lemay Forest lands.
- **March 8:** The Firekeepers of Lemay Forest led a pipe ceremony and a walk for International Women's Day.
- **March 15:** A Town Hall to Save Lemay Forest is held – Awesak Ayahsig Sakahk (Children of the Forest).



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NEXT STEPS: IMPORTANT DATES

- **March 22:** A walk/rally from the CMHR to the Legislative Building.
- **March 27:** Winnipeg City Council is set to hear a motion for expropriation of the Lemay Forest lands.

This date will mark three months since the sacred fire was lit.

- **April:** Ms. May's private prosecution against the landowner and developer alleging contravention of *The Cemeteries Act* is set to be heard.
- **April:** A motion from the Standing Policy Committee directing the City of Winnipeg to work with stakeholders to assemble the Lemay Forest lands has been laid over at the EPC.
- **April 13:** The Municipal Board of Manitoba has until this date to release their decision.



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