

Submission – Rejean Lafond

Expropriation and Rezoning of Lemay Forest (Item 1 - Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development – Notice of Motion)

Submitted: Wed, 03/26/2025 - 10:31

Delegation information

Committee you want to address
Council

Agenda item you want to address (number and title)
Item No. 1 Expropriation and Rezoning of Lemay Forest

Support or oppose recommendations
I support the recommendations

Submit comments in writing
I am writing to express my strong support for the expropriation of Lemay Forest to ensure its preservation as a vital ecological and cultural asset for our community.

Lemay Forest is a cherished neighborhood woodland, home to century-old trees that provide deep shade, a unique microclimate, and habitat for diverse species, including the federally protected pileated woodpecker. The forest's ecological significance is further underscored by its designation as a high conservation value forest by Ducks Unlimited.

Beyond its environmental importance, Lemay Forest holds profound cultural and spiritual value. For decades, Indigenous communities have conducted ceremonial practices within this sacred space, drawing healing and guidance from its serene environment. Additionally, the forest encompasses the site of the abandoned Asile Ritchot Cemetery, with records indicating thousands of deaths and burials, highlighting the area's historical significance.

Despite offers from the Manitoba Habitat Conservancy to purchase the land for over \$5 million, the current owner has declined, opting instead to pursue development plans that would lead to the destruction of this invaluable forest. Such actions not only threaten the ecological integrity of the area but also disregard its cultural and historical importance.

Given these factors, I urge the relevant authorities to proceed with the expropriation of Lemay Forest. This decisive action will protect the forest's ecological, cultural, and historical values for current and future generations, ensuring that this irreplaceable gem remains a source of community pride and environmental stewardship.

Public engagement (optional)

I consent to being contacted to participate in potential public engagement related to this matter.
No