Submission – Iris Allen

Dear Mayor Gillingham,

RE: WILDWOOD PARK FRONT YARDS

My family and I have lived at 237 Wildwood Park since June 1987. We intend to live in this unique and beautiful community for many more years.

I feel very strongly about the importance of the City retaining the front yard 50 foot setback in Wildwood Park. It is a chief component of what makes Wildwood Park so special - the front yard green spaces. So strongly do I feel about thie retension of front yard 50 foot setbacks that about 15 years ago, I went to City Hall on a few occasions to lend support AGAINST front yard variances in Wildwood Park. At the time, the City rules were different and residents who wanted to obtain a building variance had to go to a City Hall hearing to make their case.

I then became became part of a small community group (we called ourselves the Wildwood Into Tomorrow (WIT) Committee) that with the approval and assistance of then Councillor Jenny Gerbasi, conducted community meetings and a community survey which resulted in a report entitled "Background Study on the Wildwood Park Community". The document was officially adopted by the City of Winnipeg. The following is Minute No. 185 from the City of Winnipeg's webpage:

Minute No. 185
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development – February 18, 2014
Item No. 14 Wildwood Park Community – Background Study (Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry Ward) EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:
The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development and submitted the following to Council:
1. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to:
A. Utilize the Background Study on the Wildwood Park Community document as a guide to support decision making and initiatives in the Wildwood Park neighbourhood.
B. Amend the Winnipeg Zoning By-law 200/2006 to prohibit fences and landscaping that provides a fence effect, in front (parkside) yards within the Wildwood Park neighbourhood.
C. Review procedures regarding the posting of City of Winnipeg zoning notices in Wildwood Park to require dual posting in both the front (parkside) and rear
(laneside) yards.
2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Based on the community meetings and survey, the Background Study report made a number of recommendations, including (at page 58):

"That the City's Planning, Property and Development Department not approve variance applications to the minimum setback or permitted projection requirements for front yard (parkside) yards in Wildwood Park (excepting decks).
That the City's Planning, Property and Development Department continue to assess variance applications for decks in front (parkside) yards on a case by case basis in Wildwood Park."

Initially, the Background Study report was attached to the Wildwood Community Centre's website. That was a mechanism to try to ensure that new residents to the Park would be aware of the report and views of the community when the report was produced. But, unfortunately, for reasons of which I am not aware, after a few years, the Wildwood Community Centre's board removed the report from the website.

However, the City officials themselves must also be made aware of the report and the City's commitment in 2014 to follow the report in making its decisions.

I understand that the City made a mistake in approving the recent variance to the front yard setback and would respectfully ask you to do your utmost:
- to ensure that the mistake that the City made in approving the recent variance to the front yard setback in Wildwood Park does not occur again.
- to reverse the harm caused by the City's mistake, by ordering a halt to the construction process and by compensating the affected homeowner for the homeowner's loss in having the front yard setback restored.

Please let me know if I can be of any assistance in this matter.

Thank you.

Iris Allen