PUBLIC HEARING: EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
Re: Proposed plan Winnipeg Amendment By-law No.112/2004

"Red tape is a wasteful disconnect between how government works and how reality works."

"Red tape wastes time and money for both the government and citizens."

"Needless information, meaningless delays, regulations that no longer serve their purpose."

"Will consult widely with all stakeholders" " protection for minorities or the environment. "

"I never thought that would even be jeopardized"

The Winnipeg Free Press reported those words this past Tuesday, spoken by our Mayor, upon launch of the Red Tape Task Force. There is hollowness to those words as I and fellow Winnipeggers sit here today embroiled in a land development issue over the Oak Point Transit Corridor.

In terms of this particular development and applicable to many other development applications, being discussed; I ask, "What has happened to the community principle – a commitment to the community, its long term value, its relationship with its surroundings be they houses, apartments, shopping centres, schools, open spaces, recreational and cultural facilities, churches and places of employment.

What system ties these elements into the community?

Shouldn't the community principle be the major premise of land development?

I would suggest one consideration of this premise might be livability. Sound residential development, is that not what we all want and recognize as a core value in our neighborhoods.

New ways of using land must be devised to produce better neighborhoods without decreasing livability.

I realize this Mayor and Council are attempting to recast old development patterns and in doing so have placed themselves in a position of choosing between exclusionary or inclusionary land use policies.

The way that land is developed must be re-evaluated. Asking "What can I do with my land? is unwise and I would suggest results in unrealistic answers and contrived development schemes.

Wouldn't a better course be to ask the question, "What kind of development will the market absorb? A site should fit the market, not vice versa.

A basic consideration, always to be kept firmly in mind, is that private housing and commercial development for a private market is first, last, and all the time a business operation, conducted for profit and the merit of decisions is always judged by their effect upon profit.

This developer and this local government carry a great social responsibility because of the tremendous value this parcel of land represents and this neighborhood must ultimately endure the results for many years to come.

The bottom line is not just economics but whether this development functions satisfactorily for the residents and society as a whole. As co-creators of a community, developers and local governments must be sensitive to long range needs and expectations of neighborhood inhabitants.

Local government and more importantly, the developer are responsible for the judicious management of the land on a long-term basis.

Today, regardless of ownership, land is looked at by a large portion of society as belonging to all the people, with the owner's role being that of caretaker. The role of the developer and local government is to understand that society has changed and continues to change, to accept this change as a reality and to become a vital segment of this changing scene so that inevitable change is guided for the best interests of all the people.

This project and developer fail to recognize these concerns. This development must be stopped – now!

Submitted by Larry Dagg.