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To: Park, Jo-Ann
Subject: submission for Waverley West

Presentation on Waverly West

by Barry Hammond

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the development of Waverley West.

I believe the city and its citizens must look further into the future than we have been. Lots of signals indicate that food shortages and climate changes in not-to-distant times may be more significant than now. Developing Waverley West by covering 3 000 acres of prime farmland with houses and streets may seem like a good decision in 2004 but may look like a bad idea in 2024. Cost such as widening roads, new libraries, community centres and new fire stations may not be too significant, although house buyers paying, say, $350 000 may not mind a surcharge for their new services.

Other cities such as Toronto are worried enough about urban sprawl to begin thinking of alternatives. Infill housing and high rise apartments might satisfy some who wish new accommodations. Such development of alternatives may have the additional advantage of enhancing the quality of life in the rest of Winnipeg. An additional advantage may be that downtown lots are already serviced for water and waste. New heating modes such as geothermal could be installed in all new houses in Winnipeg.

Several other environmental innovations could also be explored. What are the advantages of straw bale construction compared to wood? It would seem that building wood houses and simultaneously opposing the cutting down of forests is a contradiction, since straw is readily available and is a relatively quickly renewed resource. Likewise polluting water ways with sewage does not appear like a good idea for the future. Fortunately the province is seeing the value of wind generated electricity. Hopefully the potential for solar energy may come next. The sun shines a lot in Winnipeg. Geothermal may be a good start, but we can go much further with renewable resources.

An investigation into the ND Lea report for Ladco appears that they neglected the food potential of the 3000 acres to be covered. I sense that a group of high school students could have done a better job of this report. But, it is unlikely one could find young people to do such a study since it is the young people's food that will be covered by the housing development. Likely young people will have to pay for the extended water and sewage lines too.

Also the City of Winnipeg report also appeared to neglect the environment. True, the city may gain some money but the citizens of Winnipeg will likely lose more in the process. The present Waverley West study appears useless. I suggest it, at least , be ignored.

True new houses may make a quick buck for some people who may not be around in 2024 to see the foolishness of their land grab. We speak of sustainable development but then go on to forget about children and grandchildren. I propose real sustainable development such as recycling services, reusing straw that once held up grain, and reducing pollution in our lakes and rivers. To cover over good farmland to build Waverley West is likely the ultimate in an unsustainable development.