

Community Rallies to Save Greenspace

Close to 200 concerned residents attended a community meeting hosted by Save Our Seine on November 30, 2011. The meeting concluded with unanimous consent to support the following motion:

"We demand meaningful, timely public consultation prior to the sale or redevelopment of City of Winnipeg golf courses."

A petition to present citizen's concerns to City Council was reviewed at the meeting. Petitions are available on the SOS website and will be circulated until January 9, 2012.

<http://www.saveourseine.com/>

As a result of the meeting a **city-wide citizen's coordinating committee** was established to organize stakeholders, coordinate activities related to the petition and plan further action as deemed necessary.

The citizen's coordinating group called OURS-Winnipeg (Outdoor Urban Recreational Spaces) – "Let's keep it OURS!" set up a website www.ours-winnipeg.com and Facebook ours-winnipeg

The November 30 meeting was scheduled after the City posted an Expression of Interest in October inviting proposals to either take over the operation of seven City owned golf courses or purchase the land for commercial or residential development. The golf courses include Windsor Park, Canoe Club, Tuxedo, Crescent Drive, Harbor View, Kildonan Park, and John Blumberg. Residents of Wildwood Park are also concerned about their parkland. Cross Country ski groups fear for the future of the Windsor Park Nordic cross country ski facility including groomed and lit trails for competitive and recreational skiing.

Inspired civic leaders established the Winnipeg Public Parks Board in 1893. The first park was declared in 1893 with new parks and golf courses being added until 1979. With ongoing improvements this system has been 120 years in the making. These parklands are part of our history and were set aside for the people of Winnipeg for future generations to enjoy. These parks including the seven golf courses have been paid for by us, the citizens of Winnipeg and they belong to all Winnipeggers.

The park lands, river bank wildlife corridors, historic and nature areas add value to our community and we, the public must be engaged in the discussion of what we would like to see done with these publicly owned spaces ahead of developers or third party interests. They provide health benefits, ecological benefits, recreational opportunities, corridors for wildlife, fitness opportunities and outdoor classrooms to name a few.

We need to be concerned about the **process** for the City of Winnipeg Expression of Interest for commercial and residential development of city owned Golf Courses - October 26, 2011 497-2011 <http://www.winnipeg.ca/finance/findata/matmgt/bidres/past/2011.asp>

The Free Press reported that 21 offers for development have been received so the process is moving along. This was done without public consultation to determine the best use for these green spaces. Many of these parks were set aside for public use decades ago.

Facebook: ours-winnipeg

www.ours-winnipeg.com

"Let's keep it OURS!"