

CALGARY LOCAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN

CALGARY, ALBERTA

Re: Nose Hill

A Brief presented at Thorncliffe Community Hall, January 25, 1972.

First of all we will summarize our brief which was presented at the Nose Hill Hearings to the Calgary City Council in June, 1972.

" We are here today to lend our full support to the Calgary Planning Commission's recommendation that 'all development of Nose Hill await completion of a major study into city growth alternatives.' We feel this study must be completed before any development takes place on Nose Hill (or Spy Hill, as old timers refer to it), or in the Nose Hill area. Many questions remain to be answered, both aesthetic and economic. Our concerns lie in the following:

1. Nose Hill is a beautiful natural area that certainly enhances our City. Since Calgary is not a fertile area for trees, the beauty of the grass hills surrounding it--saves the City from a barren landscape. If we are to be proud of our surroundings, we must have the prime natural areas preserved, and live with them as well as the urban sprawl and concrete City Centre.
2. We feel extensive studies must be done to determine the growth figures before any large development takes place. It is of greater importance now than ever before because of the economic implications due to the alarming decrease of fossil fuels and because the Provincial Government is urging urban regions such as Calgary to limit their size and population.
3. This study should include a careful analysis of the economic implications of future suburban developments within the present City boundaries. We believe that in many situations the geographical location of the new subdivisions often cause an increase in the mill rate. When this occurs, what was initially a good investment for the developer becomes a poor investment for the taxpayer.
4. At a time when future growth of the City is unpredictable, and perhaps undesirable, it is essential that planning precede proposals for development. This is necessary to insure optimum utilization of the land available within city boundaries, and to permit the retention of a green zone surrounding the City which is not constantly under pressure for development and inclusion into the City. "

Although today you are developing a proposal on Nose Hill, it will be done without the benefit of being an integrated part of a major study into City growth alternatives that was proposed by the Calgary Planning Commission in June, 1972. We wish to reiterate that no plan for Nose Hill can be

considered satisfactory in the absence of a comprehensive study, and therefore it is but a "band-aid" approach to planning the future of our City.

Planning that does not include adequate recognition of the aesthetic values of the uniqueness of this Hill would be incomplete. Most North American cities, with their suburban sprawl, are the same without the preservation within their boundaries of those unique landscape forms that have played a historical role in the development of the city from the time that its site was chosen initially. Nose Hill is to Calgary what Citadel Hill is to Halifax; Battlefield's Park to Quebec City; Mount Royal to Montreal; Stanley Park to Vancouver; and Beacon Hill Park to Victoria. This Hill is a dominant geographical feature in Calgary since its southern slopes can be seen from most locations in the City; providing a constant reminder to citizens of the prairie landscape surrounding them which has played such an influential role in our economic and cultural development. Calgary has never expended, to date, significant monies for parkland acquisition, although in recent years some small amounts have been budgeted, but not expended, for this purpose. The lack of a Master Plan for Park Requirements as part of a Master Plan for City and Regional Development has allowed the City to fail to acquire significant blocks of land for park purposes, including Nose Hill, at a time when it would have been economic to do so. The only existing control over the area known as Nose Hill is the absence of zoning approval for development. It is our contention that zoning approval should be *withheld in perpetuity* until such time as the City has acquired sufficient funds for the acquisition of this area.

The most valuable use for Nose Hill is to retain it in its present, near-natural state. It is priceless in crude economic terms. We propose that it be retained in this natural state. The ^{primary} ~~only~~ cost associated with our proposal would be the acquisition cost, since there would be no capital

costs associated with facility-development or with the maintenance of these facilities or manicured areas.

Visitors to our City attending the new convention centre will probably have little opportunity to sense the unique landscape flavour of the prairie surrounding Calgary, except to visit the natural grassland of Nose Hill or to view it from the Calgary Tower.

In the same way, Vancouver has within its city boundaries a small part of the natural rain forest which is characteristic of the Pacific Coast--so Calgary would become the first city in Western Canada to have a natural area of prairie vegetation.

In conclusion, we summarize by repeating that "We propose that approximately 3500 acres, ^{located on prairie} bounded on the West by the Sarcee Trail right-of-way, on the South by the John Laurie Boulevard, on the East by the existing development adjacent to the escarpments of Nose Hill, and on the North by the highlands and escarpments of Nose Hill to and beyond 80th Avenue N.W., be zoned as Natural Parkland in perpetuity.

Respectfully submitted:

CALGARY LOCAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN

Per:

Ms. W.A. Buckmaster

January 24, 1973.

MB/bd

