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Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2024 12:03 PM

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Cc: saverockwoodpark@gmail.com

Subject: Please rescind motion to designate 1671 Sandy Point Road property as surplus

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Good afternoon all,

I was disheartened to learn that, on February 20, 2024, the Saint John Common Council passed a motion to declare #1671 Sandy Point Road, a part of Rockwood Park, as surplus land without any public consultation. I have been a proud citizen of Saint John for over four years and **choose to build my life here due to the surrounding nature**. It is certainly a positive factor I mention to folks who are considering visiting or moving here. Rockwood Park is the only green space of its caliber in the city that is easily accessible by public transit and I strongly feel that it adds to the quality of life that the citizens and visitors of Saint John are able to enjoy.

While I support growing Saint John and reducing the vacancy rate, there are plenty of areas for housing development that would not compromise Saint John's prized urban park. This park is used by citizens of Saint John and beyond during all seasons. The Council must remember that one of its most important responsibilities is to preserve and protect this city's cherished green space. Please do not sell off any part of Rockwood Park for potential short-term gain.

I request **that this motion be rescinded** as soon as possible when the full council is present. Further, I encourage the Mayor to **restore public trust** by immediately committing to eliciting public opinion through a consultation period for every decision that will have lasting impacts on how the land within the boundaries of Saint John city parks will be used (including, but not limited to, Rockwood Park). This includes consultation on selling, rezoning, surplus or any other use that has the potential to impact environmental or aesthetic values.

Rather than selling lot 1671 Sandy Point Road for development, **I would like to see the areas of**

Rockwood Park along Sandy Point Road protected by a conservation agreement (conservation easement or covenant) to ensure the long-term enjoyment of this cherished green space. I also **encourage the city to develop a plan for 1671 Sandy Point Road**. This may include taking advantage of sunk costs by building park facilities or reforesting cleared land.

I worry that rezoning, selling and developing 1671 Sandy Point Rd will:

- set an unintended, short-sighted precedent – which may help to "clear the way" for other areas of Rockwood Park that are not protected by a conservation agreement to be developed.
- have impacts on the environment - 65% of the property is forested and therefore provides habitat to wildlife and helps to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- increase the input of salt and effluent from vehicles into the lake which will decrease water quality for fish, freshwater mussels, amphibians, loons and beavers.
- increase traffic issues in this area, which will pose a risk to human and wildlife health.
- affect the enjoyment of park users hiking on trails near Harrigan Lake on the Harrigan Lake Trail, Golf Trax Trail and Tour de Pants Trail.
- diminish the economic and intrinsic value of the park.

Rockwood Park is a gem, just the way it is. Please rescind the motion to surplus this property as soon as possible.

Cheers

Natasha Hynes
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