

Lasby, Mary

Subject: FW: Email - Communication - James Dynes - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Monday, February 20, 2023 2:50 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Communication - James Dynes - Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement - CK 4205-40

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Monday, February 20, 2023 - 14:48

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

Date: Monday, February 20, 2023

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: James

Last Name: Dynes

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] Brown Crescent

City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: S7J [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Private Citizen

What do you wish to do ?: Submit Comments

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: February 22, Regular Business of Council

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 9.3.1 Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement [PDCS2023-0207]

Comments:

I have submitted a letter requesting that there be no more develop in the Northeast Swale and Small Swale area.

Attachments:

- [Swale Support Letter 230220.docx](#)15.47 KB

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

His Worship the Mayor
And City Council Members
City of Saskatoon
Saskatoon, SK, Canada

February 20, 2023

Dear Sir/Madam:

RE: Northeast Swale and Small Swale Boundary Endorsement

On February 8 the Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development and Community Services recommended that the City Administration adopt Meewasin's proposed Option 3 for establishing the boundaries for the Northeast Swale and Small Swale. In addition, recommendations for corridors (e.g., width) between the Northeast Swale and Small Swale were proposed. Choosing Option 3 over Option 2, recommended by the City Administration, made me quite hopeful that the Committee is starting to understanding the challenges facing the Swales.

Nevertheless, I am of the opinion that while Option 3 is the best of the options proposed by the City Administration, it still falls short for maintaining the Swales as a viable functioning ecosystem, and will still doom the Swales to a slow and painful death.

We know that "Habitat loss and fragmentation through anthropogenic activities increases the isolation of patches, which can disrupt demographic processes such as emigration and immigration, and consequently, lead to the isolation of animal populations. These disturbances are sometimes accompanied by the creation of new structures which may further threaten the viability of animal populations" (Mazerolle, 2004).

Hence, I believe that the Northeast Swale and Small Swale, even with the establishment of wide corridors, in amongst a City neighbourhood, will be insufficient to connect the Swales, such that the viability of animal populations will be in question in the Swales.

I am of the opinion that only with the expansion of the swale boundaries, to include the remainder of the quarter sections (I believe 260 acres), which includes the lek, can we guarantee that we will have a viable functioning ecosystem. How can I guarantee this? We have a viable functioning ecosystem now. However, there is no guarantee that this will be the case if we create semi-connected patches of a native prairie ecosystem. If we find that we have made a mistake by creating these semi-connected patches, causing the collapse of the native prairie ecosystem, we cannot fix it in the future, unless you can imagine that a city neighbourhood could be undeveloped.

Moreover, the City Administration said that "...due to significant feasibility challenges the administration cannot support the *quarter sections* option. Preventing all development in this area would challenge the ability to meet Saskatoon's long-term growth needs and would require a substantial reassessment of how and where Saskatoon is expected to grow...would create significant design and feasibility challenges for development of this area including making it

difficult for the planned neighbourhood to have large enough population to support expected amenities like a school.”

I think the City Administration needs to quantify what the challenges would be with no development in the Swale area and what substantial reassessment would be required. Otherwise, it is just hand waiving, and is not good enough in my opinion for degrading the Swales. Anyways, I envision that Saskatoon will be a city of 500,000 people relatively soon, and in the long-term one million people. A neighbourhood of 10,000 to 20,000 people, would represent 1 to 2% of Saskatoon’s long-term population. Surely, developing this neighbourhood in another area of the city should be feasible and possible, especially as I understand that three years more of engineering studies are required, including a drainage assessment before construction of the neighbourhood would be begin. Surely, moving these studies to another area, with no ecological value (I am not aware of another area slated for neighbourhood development in Saskatoon and area, with anywhere close to the ecological value of the Swales), should not significantly delay neighbour development. Aside, any drainage of the Swales will significantly and drastically change the Swales, for the worst.

The City Administration at the end of their “administration/feasibility” concerns, said “Furthermore, rangeland health assessments indicated that the area (*i.e., quarter section*) is currently unhealthy due to the presence of non-native and invasive grass species and weeds. Range management would be required to reduce further proliferation of invasive species and weeds”. This is a red herring statement, and points to the fact that the City Administration does not fully believe that their administration/feasibility concerns are enough to stop development on the quarter sections. Restoration of native prairie is not rocket science, and to invoke it as a reason for developing the Swales is not valid. Techniques are well established and the expertise exists in the Saskatoon area to remove the non-native and invasive grass species and weeds and fully restore the Swale native prairie ecosystem. Would this not be a great accomplishment, improving and restoring a native prairie ecosystem, and is thus a reason for stopping further development of the Swales. We could be leaders in the Country for establishing an Urban Park. Stop the development today, and let’s get planning for the establishment of our Urban Park.

Sincerely,

James J. Dynes, Ph.D., P.Ag.

■ Brown Crescent

Saskatoon, SK,

Canada, S7J ■

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Reference

Mazerolle, M.J. 2004. Drainage ditches facilitate frog movements in a hostile landscape. *Landscape Ecology*, 20: 579-590.