

CITY OF REGINA

# Condo plan moves ahead

By JOE COUTURE  
Leader-Post

At its meeting Wednesday, the City of Regina's planning commission voted to recommend approvals for several projects.

Two that received lots of attention during the four-and-a-half-hour-long meeting were a high-rise proposed at the southwest corner of Broad Street and 15th Avenue and dwellings planned for 4001 3rd Ave. N.

The commission spent lots of time on those two largely because of issues raised by members of the communities in the areas in which the plans are being proposed.

First, it heard from members of the Centre Square Community Association on the proposed 10-storey tower, which would have condominiums plus retail and office space on the ground level. The group said its main concerns were the building is too tall, there isn't enough parking in the plan and not enough landscaping is proposed.

The commission voted to recommend approval, though it asked the city's staff to work with those involved to look at issues around landscaping in some further detail.

Developer Wayne Hydeman told media later the approach with the building is meant to be a modern one encouraging walking, with a health-food store — perhaps the answer to the oft-discussed need for a grocery store in the area — as one option for the retail space, with small cafes as another, the idea being to appeal to the local area. He also noted many

larger cities don't have surface parking like Regina. Two levels underground proposed would fit with a model like in big cities, he noted.

"I believe planning commission (members) do have their minds in the right direction. I do believe we have to look outside the box. We have to look farther ahead," he continued.

Hydeman noted the total investment required for the project is about \$22 million.

The commission also heard from 12 members of the community around the proposed dwellings on 3rd Ave. N. They spoke about concerns around crime levels, parking, traffic and flooding. Many expressed belief the development would be "low-income" and more such housing in the area would mean increasing problems.

The official Coronation Park Community Association did not provide comment.

The land in question, the site of a former school, was sold to Regina Treaty Status Indian Services, (RTSIS), which developed the school building into the community centre called The Gathering Place.

Silver Sage Housing Corporation, which also has its offices on the land along with those of RTSIS, wants to develop 62 units, including a seniors' complex, though the building would be done in stages as funding allows, the commission heard. The developer also said the plan is to rent units for about \$350 per month, meaning tenants would need to be earning between about \$40,000 and \$52,000 a year to afford rent. That means it technically will be "affordable", but not

"socially assisted" housing.

Coun. Michael Fougere noted communities often oppose in-fill development, though he said the intensity of this opposition was surprising. Community members were reminded multiple times that the commission deals with types of buildings, not the types of people who may live in them.

Bob Bjerke, the city's director of planning and sustainability, noted in the meeting that in-fill development can be positive for renewal. He pointed out the Cathedral area has the highest level of social housing in the city; its high density is considered a factor in altering the area to be desirable.

Commission members and city staff members provided answers to the questions raised by residents, including around flooding, but those residents did not appear to be satisfied. While Fougere was noting increased eyes in a neighbourhood often make it safer, Bobbi Stadyk, a resident who campaigned against the development, shouted over him before she and others left the room, although the commission had not yet voted. It did go on to recommend that council approve the project.

Fougere said after that residents got a fair hearing on the issues, noting it is democracy at work, and their right to speak.

"These are issues of growth. It's important we hear from the community. It's a difficult process to go through. I do think that ultimately this will revive the community. But you're going to get this kind of friction when you do in-fill development."

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### MEDICAL CLINICS

# Study sessions close clinics

Leader-Post staff

More than three dozen doctors in south-central Saskatchewan aren't going to work today, forcing a one-day closure of medical clinics in Moose Jaw, Assiniboia, Caronport and Gravelbourg.

The doctors, who work under the Five Hills Health Region, are attending a session of "professional study and deliberation" as the Saskatchewan Medical Association steps up its public relations campaign to highlight its frustration with contract negotiations with the province.

Patients who have appointments today are asked to call clinic staff to re-book. Those who need urgent care are asked to visit local hospitals.

The 37 doctors are attending a "session of professional study and deliberation regarding the status of contract negotiations." The doctors will also participate in a session on doctor fatigue, the association said in a release.

The association complains its talks with the province haven't been fruitful during the past two weeks and that doctors have been working without a contract for the past 19 months.

"The government needs to show that it is serious about addressing physician workload. A fair and equitable contract agreement that addresses excessive physician workload ... will demonstrate that," association president Dr. Guruswamy Sridaar said in statement issued Wednesday.

Last week, Swift Current-area doctors staged a similar protest.

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