

ITEM 14
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 72
COUNCIL MEETING Nov. 4/74

Re: Petition Dated October 24, 1974 from Residents on Yale Street,
4100 Block, Burnaby
Purchase of Residential Properties By Chevron Refinery

Appearing on the Agenda for the November 4, 1974 meeting of Council is a petition from residents on Yale Street inquiring about the purchase of two residential properties in the area by the Chevron Refinery, and the Refinery's demolition of the dwellings that were on these properties. Following is a report from the Director of Planning on this matter.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- THAT a copy of this report be sent to the petitioners; and
- THAT the Planning Department be authorized to work with Chevron Canada Limited and its consultants on development of an overall landscape concept and program for implementation of improvements for the green belt as a part of the general landscape plan.

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PLANNING DEPARTMENT
NOVEMBER 1, 1974

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
FROM: PLANNING DIRECTOR
SUBJECT: LETTER FROM RESIDENTS OF 4100 BLOCK YALE STREET
RE: CHEVRON CANADA LIMITED PROPERTY

Included in the agenda for the November 4 meeting of Council is a letter signed by 25 residents of the 4100 block Yale Street, concerning the demolition of a house in that block by its owner, Chevron Canada Limited. Concern has been expressed that such action is destructive to the neighbourhood and reduces the housing stock at a time when housing is at a premium, and the residents have expressed their wish to know just what Chevron's intentions are.

Council will recall that the refinery expansion and modernization proposal by Chevron Canada Limited includes, as one facet, the redefinition of the refinery boundary in some locations and the creation of a buffer area related to the redefined boundary and proposed Scenic Drive alignment. In order to create this buffer, it has been long intended that a program of land acquisition and a major land exchange between the Company and the Municipality would be initiated. In such an exchange, some existing refinery property and some Chevron-owned properties beyond the bounds of the existing refinery site would be exchanged for redundant street and lane allowances and portions of Municipal land north of the proposed right-of-way. In conjunction with this boundary redefinition, the rezoning of a small area north of the proposed ultimate boundary to the M5 Light Industrial category (which would not permit petroleum processing activities per se, but would round out the industrial zoning) was anticipated in the Planning Department's major initial report on the proposal in November, 1973.

In accordance with the approval in principle given on January 14, 1974, the Planning Department has been engaged in discussions with the Company concerning the first stage of the exchange proposal, and a report on the first stage should be ready for presentation to Council within the next week or two. Further, Chevron Canada has made application for a portion of the rezoning discussed earlier,

and this application will be advanced for Council's consideration with the next group of rezoning requests in mid-November.

We are informed that in recent years, the oil company has had a budget for acquiring private lands in the vicinity of its tank farm boundaries, not for the purpose of refinery expansion, but in order to create a viable buffer area adjacent to its boundaries and partly in anticipation of the land exchange as described above. Several properties in the vicinity have been acquired by the Company over the years, and in the majority of cases the existing residences have been retained in a rental housing situation.

With regard to the particular property mentioned by the residents in their letter, the Planning Department has contacted representatives of the oil company. It has been learned that this 33-foot lot was a recent acquisition by the Company as a part of the overall buffer strip development proposal, and that the building was very old and in poor condition, such that it would have been impossible to rent without extensive and costly renovation. In keeping with the Company's policy concerning properties which do not meet their standards of liveability, the decision was made to have the improvements removed. The other rental properties owned by Chevron in the area are professionally managed and generally speaking, kept in good condition. In this case however, it was considered unfeasible to restore the old structure and make it liveable.

The site itself lies one-half (north) in the proposed future road right-of-way and one-half (south) in the proposed landscaped buffer area. The property is not involved in the initial phase of the land exchange proposal to which reference is made above, but the northerly portion will presumably figure in the ultimate exchange of lands to be completed in the future. The southerly portion may in all likelihood remain in Chevron's ownership, and it will be expected to be landscaped appropriately in conformance to the objectives of the buffer strip as agreed. In the opinion of this Department the vacant southerly area should be improved with landscaping by the Company at this time as the first element of the open space landscaped buffer that is envisioned, and this principle should be applied in future cases where the Company removes the residential use from lands which form part of the eventual buffer strip.

The object of creating the buffer separation is to provide an improved spatial relationship between residential development and the adjacent industrial area, and to enhance that separation by creating a pleasant, landscaped and park-like area at the interface. The removal of residential uses, in this buffer strip, particularly where substandard housing accommodation is involved, can be supported on this basis, as it results in an improved environmental standard for the larger residential area.

Officials of Chevron Canada Limited, its landscape architectural consultants, and the Planning Department are continuing to conclude details of the overall landscaping scheme for the refinery project, as a part of the prerequisite conditions of the approval process. Although the properties to be within the buffer strip are outside the bounds of the refinery site proper, and although the buffering scheme cannot be fully implemented until all the necessary lands are acquired it would be desirable to include the development of the buffer's landscape treatment concept and an understanding of how it would be implemented, as a part of the total landscape design.

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Recommendation:

It is recommended that the foregoing be received for the information of Council,

that a copy of this report be furnished to all those persons who signed the subject letter of concern, and

that the Planning Department be authorized to work with Chevron Canada Limited and its consultants on development of an overall landscape concept and program for implementation of improvements for the green belt as a part of the general landscape plan.

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A. L. Parr,
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING.