

Councillor wants answers on land sales

Last week, Aurora Council did not approve a motion that would result in full disclosure of the sale details of the Town-owned Leslie Street lands.

Such details as sale price, special sale conditions including the details of the Town's commitment to service these Lands are being kept secret by Council.

The sale was authorized in 2011 and the Sale and servicing Agreements were finalized in 2012.

This property was purchased in 1999 for \$4.5 million with taxpayers' money.

I believe the public should have full disclosure. How is Council to be held accountable for a decision to sell these lands and whether or not public interest has been served if secrecy continues? Legislation permits full disclosure once the sale has taken place. I ask again, why the secrecy?

A Council that does not practice openness and transparency restricts the paying public from understanding decisions made on their behalf, in this case a transaction valued in excess of \$10 million dollars. Was the paying public's best interest served in this decision? You wouldn't know because the details are being kept a secret.

Providing the sale price of the land and the details and conditions agreed to by Council will not prejudice the sale of the balance of the Leslie Street lands. The sale price is accessible to any real estate agent or future purchaser of this land.

The taxpayers' and residents are the ones being left in the dark. Should they be required to take the time to go down to the Land Registrar's office to obtain the selling price information? This does not constitute open and accessible government; nor does it constitute engaging the taxpayers.

A Council moves into slippery territory if secrecy takes precedence over the taxpayers' right to obtain details on the decisions being made on their behalf, particularly when the transaction is worth over \$10 million dollars.

Councillor Wendy Gaertner
Aurora

(Editor's note: For more on Council's discussion on Councillor Gaertner's motion, please see Page 6 of this week's Auroran)