

Leave Pacific Spirit park alone: Group

Cheryl Chan

The Province

Tuesday, September 11, 2007

Hands off Pacific Spirit Regional Park.

That's the message from two Vancouver park commissioners who want the city to take an official stance against a proposed swap of Pacific Spirit parkland in exchange for preserving the 48-hectare University Golf Club.

COPE members Loretta Woodcock and Spencer Herbert are protesting NPA park commissioner Marty Zlotnik's proposal that'll keep the privately run golf course from being ceded to the Musqueam as part of negotiations between the band and the provincial government.

"Zlotnik can't see the forest for the trees," Woodcock said yesterday. "Forested parkland is of no less value than a golf fairway."

She called Zlotnik's proposed swap "disrespectful" of the park's 1.5 million users.

The 763-hectare Pacific Spirit Regional Park is managed by Metro Vancouver, formerly the GVRD.

Zlotnik was on holiday but referred The Province to the Save the Course website for his position.

Proponents of the swap said there are "far less utilized" lands in Pacific Spirit that could be developed with no restrictions. A similar-sized parcel is estimated to be worth \$600 million.

Musqueam Chief Ernie Campbell has said the band would preserve the golf course until 2033.

If this was in Vancouver, "would they offer a piece of Stanley Park in a trade?" Woodcock asked.

The parks board has been inundated with phone calls and e-mails from concerned residents, said Woodcock.

She and Herbert plan to submit a motion to the parks board next Monday to preserve the park in its entirety.

chchan@png.canwest.com

© The Vancouver Province 2007

CLOSE WINDOW