

ALDERMEN FIND COST CUTTING HAS ITS DRAWBACKS

# New library: We seem to be missing some parts

by AL IRWIN  
Citizen Staff Reporter

City council wants to know exactly what could be missing from its new \$3.08 million library.

Aldermen learned Monday the new library has no book check-out desk. The \$10,000 unit was one of the features eliminated to cut costs by almost \$1 million.

Council gave architect Graham Tudor one week to prepare a checklist of all the cuts made — and the value of those cuts — before

a fixed-price construction contract is signed. Alderman Alan Greenwell told library contractor Len Robinson, of Cana Construction Ltd., that council was promised it would get the same quality of library despite design and material cuts.

"Would you expect us to give you a \$4 million library for \$3 million?" Robinson asked.

Council also learned that Tudor's design calls for use of single plate glass in a sky-light for a saving of \$50,000, rather than double-

sealed units originally included.

Council in October gave Cana approval to begin construction after being assured the library could be built for \$3.04 million.

Robinson at that time said his firm would absorb any additional costs.

Library Board chairman Keith Gordon told council he expected a library to include a check-out desk, and he didn't want to see a "chipping away" of the \$180,000 furniture budget. Greenwell said he knew

of no building north of Hope which would be constructed without the sealed glass units.

Architect Graham Tudor said the sealed units were eliminated because the supplier would not guarantee windows of the size stipulated.

Smaller units could have been used, but the cost of

additional framework would have been excessive.

Heat loss from the sky-light, however, would not be more than from the original design using double-sealed units, because the size of the sky-light had been reduced, Tudor said.

Cana in September bid \$4 million for the project, the lowest of four bidders, yet

more than \$1 million higher than council's allotted \$2.9 million budget for construction.

Council accepted Cana's bid after a number of design and material changes worked out by Tudor and Cana, which were to cut the cost by \$929,000.

A final contract was not signed because some of the sub-trade bids had not been submitted.

Cana Branch manager Don Robertson told council in October the sub-trades would be tendered on a progressive basis, with con-

stant monitoring of the end cost, and negotiation with low bidders, to stay within the maximum \$3.04 million.

Robertson said the total cost, using this method, could be less and any savings would accrue to the city.

But council learned on March 11 that the price had jumped \$40,000 to \$3.08 million — because of additional foundation work required, higher than anticipated bids from sub-contractors, and building permit costs, not calculated in Cana's original budget.

Library board member Gordon Wainwright told council that Cana had originally stipulated construction cuts in 15 areas, which did not include the cuts revealed Monday.

But Robinson said after the meeting that those cuts were not the maximum.

Mayor Elmer Mercier told Tudor and Cana he also thought the library cost should include the check-out desk, and Robinson said later that it would be included.

Tudor will appear before council again next week.

## CITY COUNCIL

## Juvenile home locations sought

Other possible locations for a juvenile offenders transition home will be investigated before city council is asked to rezone a Van Bien residence, says a spokesman for the Cariboo Action Training society.

City council ruled last week that rezoning of a house at 1433 Van Bien St. would be required before the home, for six male juveniles, could be established.

Van Bien residents at the same meeting voiced strong opposition to such a facility in their neighborhood.

Rob Rail, program director at Camp Trapping, run by C.A.T.S., said Monday the society has not ruled out the Van Bien site, but several other locations will be investigated before a rezoning request is made.

Rezoning would require a public hearing.

The society proposes a program to help integrate offenders 13 to 17 years old back into society after they have served time at Camp Trapping or other correction centres.

Rail said the society hopes to establish a facility somewhere in the city by June.

In 1978, the Phoenix Transition Society proposed a similar facility, but city council rejected two possible locations after opposition from neighborhood groups.

## Peden Hill residents to get bill

Peden Hill residents will be billed on this year's tax notice for proposed sewer and water mains, city council decided Monday.

Council on March 10 authorized preparation of construction bylaws for the \$325,000 project, but Mayor Elmer Mercier is opposed to construction.

The frontage taxes, totalling \$5.40 a foot for both services, are more than double what residents of Peden Hill serviced in 1978 are paying.

Peden Hill resident Dick Gilbert said last week that many residents want the service, but think they should pay the same price as residents in areas of Peden Hill serviced earlier.

Gilbert said today he will circulate a petition asking for the project to go ahead, but at half the cost to residents.

Many of the lots in the area are 100 feet wide or more. The owner of a 100-foot lot will pay \$540 annually in frontage taxes, for 20 years, to pay for the service.

City Clerk Wayne Buchanan said inclusion of the frontage taxes on the 1980 tax roll does not mean residents will pay if the services are not provided.

The tax collector is now completing the tax roll for 1980 and council passed the motion in anticipation of the project going ahead.

The construction bylaw must be approved by Victoria and city council, and then must be advertised for one month, giving residents time to object to it.

City engineer Ernie Obst said if residents object enough, the project will not go ahead.

Mayor Mercier wants the service to be put off for at least a year, because of other major capital projects being undertaken this year, including the \$8.75 million sewage treatment plant expansion.

"I think we are putting something in there (Peden Hill) that people can't afford to pay for yet," Mercier said Monday.



Citizen photo by Doug Weller

Ahoy there!

Six-year-old Amber Sheil of Prince George sends her home-made ship on its way to exotic ports. The mild weather lately has turned city streets like Griffiths Avenue into wonderful sailing passages for little girls and driving nightmares for older sailors.

## NUMBER OF CROWN LOTS

## 'Province pressuring district'

The provincial lands branch is pressuring the Fraser Fort George Regional District to include more Crown land than necessary in settlement plans around the city, says regional district planner, Yvonne Harris.

Harris told city council Monday that 148 five-acre lots of Crown land in Beaverly are included in the Chilako River-Nechako settlement plan, but the ministry wants more.

She told council sale of Crown lots in areas like McLeod Lake and Tete Jaune, where residential land is scarce, is a good thing, but

private developers near the city are providing more than an adequate supply.

Council passed a motion to support the efforts of the regional district to "coordinate Crown land development within the settlement plan."

Harris said today that if the province was providing lots near the city to keep prices down, she could understand their involvement, but she said they are doing it solely to keep "their finger in the pie."

She said there is "definitely an over-supply" of five-acre

lots near the city, and the province will not become a force in the market.

Harris also said today she hoped council would provide the regional district with a little more direction on five-acre lot development near the city.

She said the city should ask the ministry exactly what the policy is with regard to Crown land lot sales.

"They (the ministry) have told me they are not trying to influence the price," Harris said.

Council Monday endorsed the regional district's Chilako River-Nechako settlement

plan, which sets out detailed land use in electoral area C for the next five years.

Electoral area C includes Beaverly, Miworth, Upper and Lower Mud River, Blackwater, Isle Pierre and other communities west of Prince George.

Public hearings on the plan are slated this week in two of the communities.

A meeting is scheduled for today, 7:30 p.m. in the Wilkins Community Hall in Miworth, and another for Thursday, 7:30 p.m. at Beaverly Elementary School.

The provincial government paid one-third of those costs last year but the district is obliged to pay the entire cost this year because of its increase in population.

Ciccone explained when towns exceed a population of 5,000 they must pay the full cost of policing.

He said the district council will also request "substantial amount" from the ministry of highways to improve a 35 km stretch of gravel road south of Mackenzie on Highway 97.

Ciccone said the amount to be requested hasn't been determined.

Also the council will meet with Cambrian Facilities of Edmonton and hold a public information meeting April 9 on a proposed \$2 million recreational complex for the district.

The meeting will be held in the Mackenzie Elementary School gymnasium and final working drawings and an artist's concept of the complex will be shown.

The complex includes a 25-metre swimming pool and 6,000-square-foot library.

Ciccone said he expects the complex to go to tender April 14 and construction to start in the third week of May.

# Local MP supports yes vote in Quebec

by DON MORBERG  
Citizen Staff Reporter

A yes vote in the Quebec referendum is the only thing which will keep Canada together, according to Prince George-Peace River MP Frank Oberle.

The MP, in Prince George for two days, bases this seemingly contradictory stand on his belief that a new order among the provinces is essential for the survival of Confederation.

"I'm convinced the referendum will pass, not with a comfortable margin, but it will pass; giving the Quebec government a mandate to renegotiate Quebec's role in confederation," he said.

"Rene Levesque will be defeated in the next provincial election in Quebec. A situation exists there as existed in B.C. in 1975. The free enterprise forces are gathering against Levesque and they will turn the rascals out."

## High interest rate solution explained

Prince George-Peace River MP Frank Oberle compares Canada's economy with "being second mate on the Titanic."

"I find it small consolation that we're going down as fast as the captain and everyone else," he said, a reference to the inflation-ridden U.S. economy.

The MP, in Prince George Monday, said the only way to solve Canada's current interest rate spiral, "is to isolate ourselves from the bungling and mismanagement of the U.S. economy. We do this by paying our bills and bringing our economy under control."

"We are tied to them because of \$6.5 billion in deficits," he said. "Interest rates will have to follow the U.S. It's small comfort that their inflation rate is twice ours. If we had our economy under control, we wouldn't have to go to foreign sources to borrow money."

Inflation is still public enemy number one in Canada, Oberle said. "I see signs of people relaxing their concern about inflation, but there isn't any leeway. Interest rates are not going to go below the inflation rate. It's simple arithmetic. Lending institutions are going to want three or four per cent profit above the inflation rate. If inflation is 10 per cent, the interest rates will be 13 or 14 per cent."

"Our inflation rate has to be controlled first," he said.

Oberle said he is convinced parts of the Crosbie budget which caused the defeat of the Conservative government in December will reappear in the new Liberal budget when the House of Commons resumes sittings.

"I think we'll see some kind of mortgage deductibility scheme. It will have a new name, of course."

Oberle also doubts the Liberals could work out a better oil-pricing scheme.

"I can't for the life of me, see the possibility of the Liberals working out an energy pricing formula with the net results being less than we proposed as the cost to the user."

Oberle made reference to the Liberal's reversal in 1974 on wage and price controls. "I hope the Liberals bring in some form or revised version of the Crosbie budget. I don't think there is any other option. Of course, I will be saying 'I told you so' when they do."

The MP said one solution to the spiralling mortgage interest rates is available to the Liberals, but is not palatable to them.

"The solution is a mortgage exchange corporation, some-

## The Citizen Local news

That, Oberle explained, will bring Claude Ryan's Liberals to power.

"Claude Ryan has his own ideas about a new order for Canada, ideas which very much coincide with mine and with our party's," the Progressive Conservative MP said. "If he comes to Ottawa with mandate and a yes vote, the federal government will have no choice but to take constitutional reform seriously and decide it in a earnest and sincere manner."

Oberle said that scenario will set the stage for Western

Canada to join with Quebec in arguing for the constitutional change.

"There is a legitimate feeling of alienation in Western Canada," he said. The Liberal majority government elected only two members west of the Ontario border, both were in Manitoba.

The problem could be complicated if the people of Quebec vote no on the referendum.

"If the referendum fails, Ryan will come to power, but he will be negotiating with all the wind out of his sails," he said.

"There would be no new deal and if there isn't a new deal, there won't be a Canada in four years."

"I can't recall a speech since I've been in politics without some reference to the problems of national unity or the restructuring of the constitution to bring about solutions. But nothing has ever happened," he said.

"We haven't even been able to bring the constitution home or to amend it. If the feelings of the provinces are not dealt with, this country won't hold together for four years," Oberle said.

The Quebec referendum is asking, yes or no, if the Quebec government should be given the right to renegotiate its role with the rest of Canada. A date for the referendum has not been set.

### A Thought for Today

One trouble with the world today is that there are too many people in it who are willing to put in their oars but not willing to row.

—Hugh Allen

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