

## Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

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**From:** Miriam Neuman

**Sent:** June-02-14 7:57 PM

**To:** Braun, Tracey (CWS); Dagdick, Elise (CWS); Ouimet, Darrell (CWS); Webb, Bruce (CWS)

**Subject:** Parker Wetlands and the Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor

Dear Ms. Braun and members of the Manitoba Conservation  
Environmental Approvals,

I am aware that there will be a discussion on June 3, 2014 regarding the piece of land known as the Parker Wetlands and the 2014 Capital Budget regarding the combining the "Pembina Highway Underpass" project, the "Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor - Stage 2" project, and an authorization to proceed with construction on these wetlands. I wish I could be in attendance, but since

There is a more environmentally responsible option of relocating the CN Rail lines between Leg 1 of the corridor on Jubilee to Bison Drive. Perhaps it is more expensive in dollars but there is a huge price to pay, a hidden price by proceeding with parcel of land occupied by the Parker Wetlands.

I will never forget the day ten years ago when I stumbled across The Parker Wetlands. They are most certainly a precious urban treasure.

I strongly feel that further study must go into the next stage of the Southwest rapid transit corridor. A long hard look has to been taken before this wonderful piece of land is destroyed for ever.

I feel that taking the path of least resistance, (that is using the unoccupied wetlands off of Parker) will forever more blot an important ecosystem off the Winnipeg map. These urban wetlands play a vital role in maintaining the health of the surrounding areas by providing clean water and fresh air as they are a natural filtration system. These wetlands also aid in minimizing flooding. Hiding in an urban monoculture of lawns and cement, the wetlands are home to an amazingly diverse population of vegetation, deer, fox, owls, hawks, and frogs. And last year, I was thrilled to see a mother and her brood of prairie chicks by the road. In addition, as a dog owner, my family and my dogs use and immensely enjoy the Brenda Leipsic off-leash dog park on a weekly basis. The dog park is located on a significant portion of this site and it is used by hundreds of people.

I have always been amazed, surprised and calmed by this well hidden gem, these irreplaceable wetlands located in the middle of suburbia, that somehow managed to stave off being paved over into parking lots. We really won't know what we've got until it's gone. I ask you again to rethinking paving paradise to up this leg of the rapid transit system.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the more environmentally responsible option.

Sincerely,  
Miriam Neuman

## Dagdick, Elise (CWS)

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**From:** shane Nestruck  
**Sent:** June-02-14 10:26 AM  
**To:** Braun, Tracey (CWS)  
**Subject:** One thought

Ms. T. Braun,  
Reference File # 5709.00.  
Manitoba Conservation  
Environmental Approvals  
123 Main St Suite 160  
Winnipeg MB R3C 1A5

RE; dog parks and the city of Winnipeg policies around dog parks:

I am familiar with a few of these parks and especially the Maple Grove Park (south on St. Mary's at the perimeter) and the Parker Wetlands area park. At its early development i was a board member of tMaple Grove Dog park Association.

I would suggest that the concept of DRIVING to a park to WALK (exercise) one's dog ( e.g. Maple Grove) is completely irrational in actual concept.... The whole idea of dog parks is for PEOPLE and dogs to enjoy some outside activity, which is the very opposite in Healthy activity, Environmental and even traffic concerns that driving in a car provides.

Thus I suggest the Parker Wetlands park is SUPERIOR in that it is central to the south part of the city...thus closer to more people and dogs... and therefore is of far greater value and importance than often seen. Add to that all the advantages that green space ! within a short bike ride of the legislature ! offers the citizens and it is incredible that there is any concept at all about "developing" this area.

One last comment: On a dismal or cold day, with perhaps rain one can find VERY FEW people in any of the parks in Winnipeg BUT IN THE DOG PARKS there are always many people getting healthful exercise. Take that to an extreme -30 degrees and the ONLY place you will find people getting healthy exercise and fresh air ARE the DOG PARKS!

Thank you!

Shane Nestruck

## **Dagdick, Elise (CWS)**

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**From:** Heather Erickson  
**Sent:** June-03-14 11:27 PM  
**To:** Braun, Tracey (CWS)  
**Subject:**

Tracey Braun, MSc. Director  
Manitoba Conservation  
Environmental Approvals  
123 Main St Suite 160  
Winnipeg MB R3C 1A5  
CANADA

Re: Conservation of The Parker Wetlands

I grew up in Ft. Rouge and occasionally cycled to the Park Theatre to see a movie. In those days, there was not a whole lot of development past that point. There was a large dairy west of Stafford and Grant Avenue was the CN Main Line West with a Manitoba Pool Elevator on the corner of Lilac and what is now Grant. While I realize that cities must grow and develop, it is not healthy for Administrations to lose sight of the fact that green space, trees and wetlands are absolutely necessary for the health of communities, both physically and mentally. Monarch butterflies filled the sky in the summer, there were multitudinous birds, and people enjoyed the outdoors. I am only 73.

When I became an adult and contemplated investing in property and a home, the City of Winnipeg had grown so much that I looked outside its environs because the ambiance had changed from small town with a touch of rural to bordering on concrete jungle. I wanted my home to be quiet and peaceful with a modicum of privacy.

Subsequently city planners, in their lust for building lots, have in-filled every available green space, without leaving healthy living spaces to promote exercise and outdoor activity. It is now the 21st Century and academics everywhere are realizing the mistake they have made by being short-sighted. The decimation of forests, of wetlands, of habitat, the pollution of our air and water, our use of oil and gas have changed the climate of the Earth, and its degradation is exponential yet in quest of the almighty dollar, we are ignoring our contribution to global warming.

The good news is that it is not too late and we can start in small ways to ensure future generations will not pay the price for our greed. Wetlands are essential to the cleansing of our air and water. Trees are necessary as they use carbon dioxide, they provide habitat for birds. We destroyed the Netley Marsh system which purified the water entering Lake Winnipeg and now we have polluted water, algae bloom. Wake up and smell the roses. Leave the Parker Wetlands alone.

And as for the Rapid Transit system conceived by the City Council and Mayor, that is the singularly second biggest waste of money by this city in the last 20 years. We should be working toward more environmentally friendly types of transportation. In case you did not notice, this Province has electricity being produced which could be used for electric commuter trains. Looking even further into the future, this province has a large

percentage of sunny days and that Sun is being wasted. Why not harness it and use it to heat homes and power city vehicles and commuter trains. The first waste of money was the Museum of Human Rights. I am sure Mr. Asper would be appalled at the cost of that monstrosity. It overpowers the skyline. We could have found a less expensive building to contain the memory of the atrocities man heaps upon mankind without creating an architectural monstrosity which will undoubtedly cost a fortune to maintain. It is anything but environmentally friendly.

My home is in Springfield. Our Council is bent on the same overdevelopment, the same urban sprawl. The lots in the new developments were at first quite large, but they have shrunk significantly in just a few years. Now they want to subdivide the area north of Birds Hill Park and surround the park with residences, threatening our groundwater aquifers that are already under duress. I intend to do what I can to thwart the destruction of my community. But I know that what affects one community eventually affects all and I wanted to lend my voice to the campaign to protect the Parker Wetlands.

My advice to the Winnipeg Council. Build up, not out. Look at other major cities in this country and the world. Put gardens on the tops of buildings. Install solar systems. Small wind towers can also be quite effective. Stop borrowing on your children's future. Fix our home, Earth. It is the only home you have. Ensure a balance between green space and residences and businesses. Encourage walking and biking. Come up with a transit system that does not use gas combustion engines. We used to have electric trolleys. Maybe they were a nuisance at times, but they were clean transportation. We have new technologies. Stop draining the swamps and other wetlands. Achieve détente with nature.

Heather A. Erickson

**Dagdick, Elise (CWS)**

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From: Orlikow, John  
Sent: June-07-14 2:25 PM  
To: Dagdick, Elise (CWS)  
Cc: Sabesky, Georgina  
Subject: opposition to FILE: 5709.00 draft

Elise Dagdick  
Conservation and Water Stewardship  
Environment Officer  
204-619-0709  
[elise.dagdick@gov.mb.ca](mailto:elise.dagdick@gov.mb.ca)<mailto:elise.dagdick@gov.mb.ca>

I wish to make a representation/register my opposition to the approval of the CITY OF WINNIPEG - SOUTHWEST RAPID TRANSIT CORRIDOR - STAGE 2 - FILE: 5709.00 pursuant to The Environment Act.

My objections are based on errors in assessing the impact of the Rapid Transit Corridor and flaws associated with the collection and use of evidence related to assessment.

Please advise if I am to appear or write in my opposition for consideration.

Thank you,  
Councillor Orlikow

Bev Pike

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
June 3, 2014



Manitoba Conservation  
Environmental Approvals  
123 Main St Suite 160  
Winnipeg R3C 1A5

To Members of the Environmental Approvals Committee:

**Reference File # 5709.00: Parker Wetlands and Brenda Leipzig Dog Park**

I am writing to urge you and your government to protect this pristine parkland in the middle of Winnipeg.

On it grows various Bluestems, Manitoba's provincial grass.

To sacrifice it for an ill-planned development of 3,500 condos near an ill-planned rapid transit line is an embarrassment to your government.

Why not show you care for the environment within this city?

Developers having strong ties to the Mayor, such as the ones wishing to build on these valuable wetlands, should not receive your blind endorsement.

If you support this urban devastation, you send the message to voters that you disregard them.

Voters are very critical of over-spending their tax dollars in favour of developers whose projects promise no neighbourhood gain and much community devastation.

Build on your green reputation and deny developers this culturally significant land.

Thank you,

*Bev Pike*  
Bev Pike

Response to:

***“City of Winnipeg Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor – Stage 2 Environmental Review and Assessment”***

Response by:

Parker Wetlands Conservation Committee (PWCC).

June 8, 2014

This submission focuses on the plant and wildlife component of the Environmental Review and Assessment.

There are major shortcomings in Dillon's report with respect to the presentation of plant and wildlife data. The report lacks basic ecological data upon which an environmental review and assessment can be made. The following categories typically addressed in an EIA report that were poorly dealt with (PWCC's response in parentheses) include:

**1. Vegetation data**

i. no description of methodology ie. plot size, sampling intensity used for conducting October 2013 vegetation survey

ii. vegetation surveys conducted by Dillon in October

*(quality vegetation surveys are typically conducted from late May through to early August. According to Dillon (p.46) “the timing of the [plant] survey was not optimal for the identification of plant species that emerge and flower earlier in the growing season”).*

iii. plant list in appendix based on City of Winnipeg's (1995-2005) vegetation surveys

*(data doesn't necessarily reflect what species are there now, in 2014)*

iv. last known Big Bluestem (BBS) plant identified in Parker wetlands was in 1995, p. 46.

*(Big bluestem can be observed throughout Parker wetlands in 2014 and an experienced botanist would have seen them in October 2013)*

v. dismissive of Tallgrass Prairie Ecosystem in report

*(Tallgrass Prairie is an assemblage of many plant species including indicator species such as Prairie Cordgrass and BBS which were listed in Appendix. Yet, the report is dismissive of its existence in Parker Wetlands. “There may be some tallgrass prairie plant species surviving in*

*the area, but due to the late season sampling .....it was not possible to identify all the grass species (p. 46 of report) . Manitoba conservation identifies Tallgrass prairie as an endangered ecosystem.)*

### **Summary:**

From an environmental review and assessment perspective, the effort put into the sampling, collection and analysis of the vegetation data in the report is inadequate. The report was dismissive of any possibility of Parker wetlands containing Tallgrass prairie, an endangered ecosystem.

## **2. Bird data**

- i. no standard breeding bird, winter resident or spring migration surveys conducted

*(a basic element of an EIA is to determine what species of birds occur in an area to be developed)*

- ii. poor quality bird data

*(Dillon's ornithological survey resulted in the observation of American crow, Canada goose, common grackle, downy woodpecker, house sparrow and northern flicker( p. 54). Over 40 species of birds are known to utilize Parker wetlands, based on the results of breeding bird, spring migration and Christmas bird surveys conducted by PWCC volunteers between 2006 and 2014. On June 1, 2014, four raptor species were observed either hunting or roosting in Parker wetlands including great horned owl, Swainson's hawk (dark phase), American kestrel, and northern goshawk. A breeding pair of Swainson's hawk have nested for several years in the forested areas of Parker Wetlands)*

- iii. fallacious statements

*(In the Species at Risk section, Dillon's report mentions that no Species at Risk were observed in October survey. Dillon's report asserts that the listed Species at Risk (p. 57) would only use the Parker wetlands as feeding or resting areas. Yet the report provides no evidence to suggest these species breed in the area. Based on the habitat requirements of some of the listed Species at Risk, including barn swallow, northern leopard frog, monarch butterfly and possibly short-eared owl, breed in Parker wetlands).*



**Summary:**

The absence of bird data in an environmental assessment and review report is unacceptable. Excluding birds in the report is clearly, a major shortcoming of the report.

**3. Herpetological and Insect data**

- i. no frog or reptile surveys conducted in Parker wetlands to check for northern leopard frog – a Species at Risk.
  
- ii. no insect surveys to ascertain the status of monarch butterfly (Species at Risk) and its habitat

**Summary:**

No field surveys were conducted to assess the status of two wildlife species designated as **Species at Risk** by the province of Manitoba. This is a serious shortcoming of the report.

**General Summary**

No standard surveys for plants, birds, frogs and snakes, and insects were undertaken by Dillon. Some of the biological data in the report was outdated, collected at the wrong time of year and collected by inexperienced field biologists resulting in a mediocre quality of report at best. This resulted in a serious absence of plant and animal data that is essential for an environmental review and assessment. Given this lack of information, it is difficult to understand why this report was submitted in its current form for an environmental review and assessment. At the least, there must be seasonally and technically appropriate bird, plant, frog and insect surveys conducted in the Parker wetlands to allow a meaningful environmental review and assessment to take place. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Parker Wetlands Conservation Committee

Ms. Jennifer Sinclair  


Reference File # 5709.00

Ms. Tracey Braun, Director  
Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship  
Environmental Approvals Branch  
Suite 160, 123 Main Street  
Winnipeg MB R3C 1A5

Dear Ms. Braun

I am writing to you in regards to the proposed development of the Parker Wetlands with the hope that you will not give approval for this project. I have many concerns surrounding the use of this land for the second phase of rapid transit.

First I believe that this route is not beneficial to the greatest number of transit users which should be the goal of building a rapid transit system. It would be much better if the line was built closer to Pembina highway so that more transit riders and business owners can benefit.

In addition I have heard many convincing arguments that light rapid transit could be done for less money, will be more durability, increase ridership and can be more easily installed on main thoroughfares. The benefits of light rapid transit could also help revitalize our downtown by encouraging people to live, work and play in our city's centre.

Finally the most important reason to deny this development request is that it will save one of the largest wetlands within the city limits. This is a wonderful green space that we can share with the wildlife and plant life that call this area home. Our city green space is incredibly valuable and cannot be replaced once it is lost. I deeply love this city and I am very excited to share it with my young daughter. However, I fear that over development will turn this city into a lifeless concrete jungle unless we can stop development that is profit driven for a select few and short sighted.

I recall the actions of a past city council that made it their mission to protect Assiniboine Park even when many in the city wanted to develop the land. Thankfully for us this did not happen and I hope in the future that I can say the same regarding the Parker Wetlands.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

Jennifer Sinclair

**Dagdick, Elise (CWS)**

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From: Laura Pearson  
Sent: June-09-14 6:46 PM  
To: Braun, Tracey (CWS)  
Cc: Laura Pearson  
Subject: re: Reference File # 5709.00 - Stage 2 of the Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor.

Reference File # 5709.00  
Ms. Tracey Braun, Director  
Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship Environmental Approvals Branch

Dear Ms. Braun,

I am writing to you with hesitation and a sense of futility, as I realize the development of Parker Wetlands and area is ultimately a "done deal". There are many of us who feel our voices have been unheard. I am one of many who has marvelled to find an area such as this in the middle of a city, our city of Winnipeg. This area, if saved, and perhaps thoughtfully developed could put our city on the map as a leader in truly progressive city planning. I am fully supportive of our tax dollars being used to entice people to take the bus or to cycle for the sake of our environment. Is it not, though, counter-intuitive to be moving toward the health of our environment and our people, while at the same time destroying this urban ecological treasure?

I have taken the bus route down Pembina Highway many times. I believe this is one of the best and fastest bus routes in the city as it is, but with a bit of work and with relatively very little funding it could be fantastic. With the addition of designated bus lanes, coupled with the new double length buses, the money saved on rapid transit would be immense. The ill-considered bike lanes that have been added down Pembina could instead go along the railway track or there could even still be a proper cycling route incorporated into this world class nature oasis within our city. This area is worth a second thought. I am grateful for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Laura Pearson

**Dagdick, Elise (CWS)**

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**From:** Smith, Jay  
**Sent:** June-09-14 4:50 PM  
**To:** Braun, Tracey (CWS)  
**Subject:** RE: Rapid Transit Corridor

Hello,

I'm writing this e-mail in opposition of the planned rapid transit corridor causing the willful destruction and rape of the serene parker green space.

The green space is some of the last remaining in the city. It is the centerpiece of our neighborhood. Destroying the green space and spending an obscene amount of tax dollars to do so is not in the interest of anyone in the neighborhood. It appears a decision was made without any consultation with the residents this affects. No one in our neighborhood wants this, so why would a conscious decision be made to build it? It's quite infuriating. My neighbours and myself feel nothing but depression and anger mixed with a feeling of defeat in regards to the terrible news that has been given to us.

At risk of sounding like a broken record by repeating what is constantly said by others, the strange detour makes absolutely no sense and completely contradicts its own title of "rapid" transit. Again, this road will destroy beauty and serenity, increase congestion, and cost way too much money for it to even begin to be worth it. I have spent time watching the rapid transit busses and I have seen the empty busses repeatedly drive by. Why would such an underutilized transit system be pushed even further? This is wasteful and it seems like whoever came up with the idea is not only pushing their own agenda with no care for the residents this affects but also appears they are unwilling to go back and admit that they were wrong with the way this transit system is being executed.

Please consider turning the decision around for the sake of the people, for the sake of taxpayers, for the sake of not ruining the Fort Garry neighborhood, and for the sake of the environment. No good will come of this road.

Thank you for reading this.

Jay Smith, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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**Dagdick, Elise (CWS)**

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**From:** Lisa

**Sent:** June-09-14 4:31 PM

**To:** Braun, Tracey (CWS)

**Subject:** Reference File # 5709.00 - Parker Lands Development in Winnipeg

Dear Tracy,

I found your email on this link: <http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/eal/contact.html>

If this is not your area, please forward to the appropriate person.

My name is Lisa Waldner and I'm a tax payer in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I visit the Parker Wetland area every day and enjoy it immensely. I feel this area is very unique and should be preserved. However, recent real estate transactions with very questionable legalities have put this area at risk. I'm asking you to do anything possible to stop this area from being drained and cleared to make way for a very archaic model of "rapid" transit and future development. This area is very much a marsh and forest in the city.

Here is a link to some photos I took of the area last fall:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/523pp96cmdegz8m/AADDtsvAE8uzDXDYC2e7Jy4ka>

The land swap that was done is very controversial and the city of Winnipeg continues to postpone a hearing on this issue. As well, on June 3rd I attended a City Hall Hearing where I was allowed to ask questions but did not receive a single answer. In a large crowd of people there was only one person who was in favour of the transit line however city council voted 2-1 in favour. They are not listening to what their city is saying and quite obviously have a different agenda.

It is unbelievable that this issue has come so far when so few people are in favour. Over the past 9 months I have attended two transit forums, one community centre discussion and one public hearing and in all cases 99% of the public in attendance have been against this development.

If I could appeal to you on a more personal level, I ask that you think about a land where we can breath the air, catch fish in our ponds, have picnics on the grass and enjoy the company of family, friends and neighbours at a drop-in community meeting place that is free for all. A place where we can enjoy and learn from nature. We have that place, it's at the Parker Wetlands. I ask that in the decisions you make you choose people and nature over development and you ensure our air and drinking water will remain clean for all in this and other decisions you make.

Please do not destroy the Parker Wetlands.

Thank-you for your time and consideration.

*Lisa Waldner*  


## **Dagdick, Elise (CWS)**

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From: Susan Belmonte  
Sent: June-09-14 4:30 PM  
To: Braun, Tracey (CWS)  
Subject: Reference File # 5709.00

I am writing in opposition to the current request by Dillon Consulting for approval and licensing under the Manitoba Environment Act for the proposed development of the City of Winnipeg's Stage 2 of the Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor. The only field survey of the Parker lands was done in October when much of the wildlife had left the area. As stated in the request, an additional assessment should be done in the spring. In addition to the environmental impacts and loss of the Parker wetlands, there is much public opposition to Winnipeg's city council decision-making surrounding the route and funding of stage 2. I believe these decisions, which affect all Manitobans, must be based on true due dilligence...full environmental assessment, current and anticipated transit ridership data, realistic budget estimates and debt repayment plans. Stage 2, in whatever form it takes, does not have to result in the destruction of the Parker lands. It would best serve the community and the City of Winnipeg located along Pembina Highway.

Thank you,  
Susan Belmonte