

archival



Backroom deal favors mall

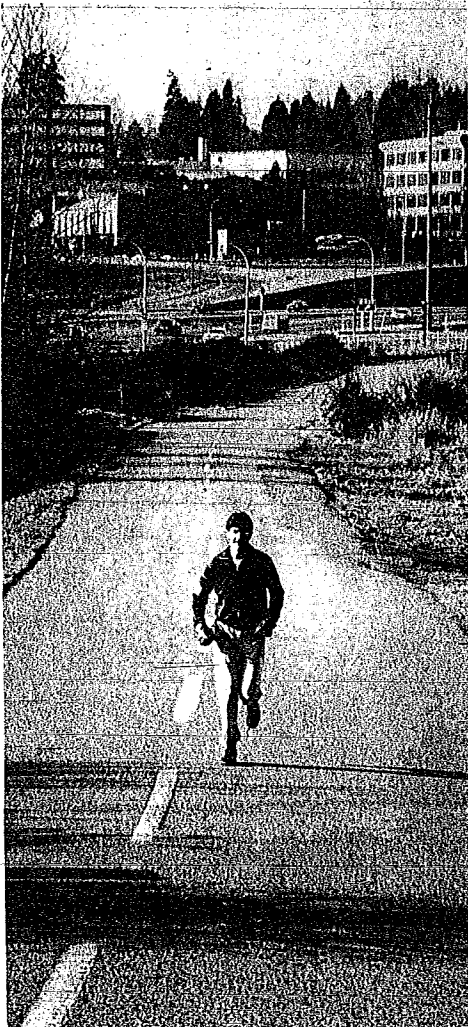


Photo by Basil King

LONELY GUY . . . No traffic jams here, says jogger Rick Traying. He has Glencrain Drive all to himself as he enjoys a lunchtime run adjacent to Burnaby Lake.

A backroom deal between Alberta super-mall developers and B.C. Hydro may have moved a proposed West Edmonton-style shopping centre one step closer to construction.

B.C. Hydro spokesman Hor Maeno confirmed late last week that an agreement was about to be signed giving the Edmonton-based Triple Five Corp. control of the Dominion Bridge site at Lougheed and Boundary.

Triple Five wants to build a massive mall and amusement centre

By DAVID SPANER

at the site, but municipal council earlier rejected the mall proposal by reaffirming that Burnaby's commercial core would be built in Metrotown along Kingsway.

The site contains two parcels of Hydro-owned land that total 30 acres, another 30 acres of B.C. Transit-owned land and 2.7 acres that's owned by Wolfe Chevrolet.

Triple Five earlier obtained an agreement to purchase Hydro's land

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on the site and now Hydro has worked out a deal that would deliver the transit land to the Edmonton developers.

"We are acquiring it from B.C. Transit and turning it over to the developers," Maeno said. "We have an agreement in principle. My understanding right now is that it's in the process of being signed."

Maeno, Hydro's manager of property management, said Hydro facilitated negotiations with the

developers and transit so there would not be two separate sets of negotiations.

"They (the developers) want the total site," he said.

Mayor Bill Lewarne reacted angrily to news about the Hydro deal with Triple Five.

"I really don't know what their (Triple Five) motive is," he said.

"As long as the existing council is in place they won't get their zoning," Lewarne, a member of B.C. Tran-

sit's 10-member board, said the Hydro agreement is "a terrible slight to our (Transit's) real estate division."

"If the property is going up for sale, we don't need Hydro to do what our real estate division is competent to do."

Lewarne said he would put up a fight over the issue at a B.C. Transit meeting he was scheduled to attend late last week.

He said the agreement had to be endorsed by the 10-member board, adding that transit properties cannot be sold unless they're first listed on the public market.

"I had suspected background work was going on. I didn't know when it would rear its ugly head," Lewarne said.

He said council will continue to oppose the mall because it would cause traffic problems and decimate centres such as Metrotown, Lougheed Mall and Brentwood.

Lewarne supports a movie studio

(See VICTORIA, Page 3)

Middle-of-road party takes shape

A new "moderate" political party will be on the Burnaby ballot in November's municipal election.

Stewart Shearman, a Burnaby teacher, said last week that the newly-formed Burnaby Electors' League is an alternative to the "confrontational" politics of the Burnaby Voters' Association and the Burnaby Citizens' Association.

"We're basically a middle-of-the-road party in the sense that we don't wish to indulge in confrontational politics," Shearman said. "We're not out to fight unless it's forced on us. We're a group of moderates looking for reasonable solutions to problems."

Shearman said the organization will meet Feb. 25 to hammer out a plan of action.

A number of friends got together and decided it was time to begin a new force in Burnaby politics," he said.

Shearman said he is a longtime Liberal Party activist and his "third force" bears similarities to Graham Lea's provincial movement.

He added, however, that the BEL will not be affiliated with a larger political party.

His statements about the two

established parties weren't entirely negative.

Shearman said BVA Mayor Bill Lewarne has done a "fair to middling job" and BCA Ald. Doug Drummond is a good "leader of the opposition."

But Shearman said he's concerned with extremes within the two major parties.

"Some like (BVA Ald. Vic) Stuslak appear to be out on the right wing. I don't agree with many of the things he's said," Shearman said.

He also had harsh words for the downgrading of the fire department and the construction of the Kensington Overpass.

"All that's going to do is open up a quiet residential area to traffic," he said.

Shearman said the BEL, in a search for potential candidates, "put out feelers" to some prominent residents, including "one or two" council members.

He declined to name the council members but said that the BEL has considered approaching former mayor Tom Constable to head its slate.

Shearman said the party has yet to make a decision on the Constable suggestion.

The BEL was news to Constable last week.

"I've never heard of them," he said. "I've not discussed anything with them at all."

Constable said he would be a candidate for Burnaby council this November, although he hasn't decided which position he'll seek.

"It would take a lot to convince me to run for mayor," he said.

Constable said Lewarne has done a good job, adding: "I did a better one."

"I'd listen to them, yes," Constable said of the BEL.

"I find it extremely interesting and I'll probably wait and see if they'll contact me. I won't be going out looking for them, whoever they are."

J. P. Daem, a longtime political mate of Constable's and a former parks commissioner, said the BEL has contacted him.

"I'm certainly interested in running," he said.

Daem said he couldn't commit himself to the BEL until he's met with members and is comfortable with their political philosophy.

"You don't want to run with people you don't like," Daem said.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT SLAMMED

Burnaby politicians have slammed Edmonton mall developers' threatened involvement in this year's municipal elections.

Alberta developer Rubin Stahl said the Edmonton-based Triple Five Corporation, the company that constructed the massive West Edmonton mall, is determined to build a similar shopping centre and "fantasyland" at Lougheed and Boundary despite council objections.

"It is too big for a city council and a mayor to make a decision on," Stahl said on a recent talk show debate with Burnaby Mayor Bill Lewarne.

"Believe me, before this is over, we will go to a referendum," said Stahl, Triple Five's vice-president.

"You will suffer the consequences," the Alberta developer told Lewarne. "It (council's rejection of the mall) is almost sacrilegious."

"This will be an issue in the next election," Stahl vowed. "I'll be there to see to it that the voters have a right to say if they want it or they don't want it."

"I will develop it in Vancouver (area). Be sure of that," he added.

Lewarne later denounced the statements of the spokesman for Triple Five, which is owned by Edmonton's Ghermezian family.

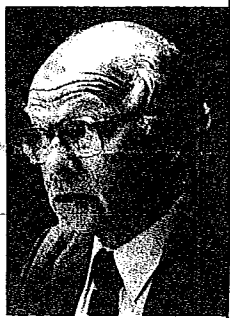
"They're very threatening people," the mayor said. "It's their style or lack of it, the style they seem to be comfortable with."

Late last year, council reaffirmed its position that Metrotown along Kingsway would be Burnaby's commercial core, effectively killing Triple Five's megamall.

But council's move didn't stop the Ghermezians.

"It could be an issue," Lewarne said. "I don't see it as an important issue. By May, construction on the Sears site in Metrotown will be starting."

"It's an issue I'd love to run on — someone from Edmonton try-



Bill Lewarne . . . it's their style

ing to tell us how to run our affairs in Burnaby."

Lewarne said his civic party, the Burnaby Voters' Association, will not accept campaign contributions from the Ghermezians.

"There would be no acceptance of any contributions at all for our campaign because we'd be so much in opposition to them," Lewarne said.

"I am not going to prostitute myself to this job if it means I have to sell out the community in the process. We have to have loyalties to small business people on Hastings and small merchants in Brentwood Mall and Lougheed Mall.

Lewarne supports the proposal to build one of North America's largest movie studios at the Lougheed and Boundary site.

He said the studio would boost Burnaby's tourism industry.

"How many people go down to Hollywood to look through the studios?" he said. "If you look at Tom Selleck being in town or Dolly Parton, I think it's kind of nice. I think it's image building."

"A mall is a mall. The film in-

(See MOVIE, Page 3)

Nurse layoff 'a threat'

Keep the nurse in school, Burnaby council has told the school board.

Council was responding last week to a report from Medical Health Officer S. L. Hemming that provincial restraint on education spending will force the layoff of one school nurse this year.

Ald. Egon Nikolai said he is "100 per cent opposed" to a reduction in health services. Such cuts pose a "threat" to health standards in the municipality's schools, he said.

Nikolai received council support in his motion asking the school board to reconsider its decision.



Ald. Egon Nikolai . . . priorities

Because the school board budget has been reduced by almost 8.5 per cent for 1985 by the provincial government, the board has opted to

cut at least one nurse's salary to help make up the shortfall.

The reduction in school health services has been steady since 1982.

With the proposed layoff for 1985, the cumulative reduction in school health services will be just over 18 per cent, according to Hemming's report.

The existing health program is primarily aimed at responding to acute health problems, although those services have had to be pared down as well.

The community health nurses' time for supporting families with special needs children is becoming "thin," Hemming said.

Council approved a motion by Nikolai to ask the school board to reconsider the most recent layoff and also agreed to hear a delegation by the B.C. Nurses Union which opposes the layoff.

Mob scene ends popular teen night

Victoria could intervene

(Cont. from Page 1)

that has been proposed by the B.C. film industry for the site. If Triple Five purchases the property, the studio will be killed.

Gunter Henning, head of Tegra Industries, the film company that wants to establish a major studio on the site, said he's yet to hear back from the provincial government on his proposal.

"Nothing has been clarified with this thing," he said. "That's the problem. It's really a very annoying limbo because nobody speaks up, nobody takes a stand. I think the mall question has to be settled first."

A spokesman for B.C. Labor Minister Bob McLelland confirmed that Triple Five, although it presented no proposal to Burnaby council, has submitted a proposal to the provincial government's cabinet committee on economic development.

The spokesman, who asked to remain anonymous, said McLelland, who heads the committee, and Industry Minister Don Phillips travelled to Alberta to see Triple Five's West Edmonton mall.

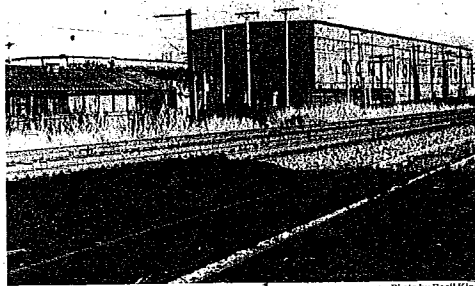
Lewarne said he understood that the ministers were "very bullish" on the mall.

If the Hydro/Triple Five transaction is signed, the only thing stopping the mall would be council's refusal to rezone the site, but the provincial government could circumvent council through legislation in Victoria.

Lewarne said he doesn't believe Victoria would go over council's head to impose a mall.

"If they really want a fight, they better start meddling like that," he said. "I think they've got enough problems without fooling around with municipal affairs in that nature. If they did that, there's no question that both the associations (the Burnaby Citizens' Association and the Burnaby Voters' Association) would be hostile to the government."

If council refuses to rezone the property and the provincial government doesn't intervene, Triple Five could still go ahead with the purchase and sit on the site until a council is elected that will rezone it.



Dominion Bridge site . . . at corner of Boundary and Lougheed.

Lewarne said it took Triple Five nine years to put together the West Edmonton mall.

"They're persistent. There's no question about it," he said. Lewarne said it would be costly for Triple Five to sit on the land in the hope council will rezone some day.

He estimated the property would cost about \$30 million and taxation would cut into Triple Five's monies that could be invested profitably elsewhere.

"If they want to play the waiting game, I would suggest government has longer to wait than they do," he said.

Lewarne said Triple Five is delaying other developments in Burnaby. Besides the movie studio stall, Metrotown will have trouble attracting department stores while the possibility of the supermall is alive, Lewarne said.

He said that without such "anchor tenants," it will be difficult for the Daon Developments commercial project at Metrotown to start.

Daon spokesman Don Milliken said his company is still committed to Metrotown.

He said its Metrotown option with Kelly-Douglas expired recently and that Daon is in the process of restructuring its agreement.

"The council has been very clear

that (Triple Five) is not going to happen," he said.

Lewarne disputed Triple Five's contention that the West Edmonton mall has not hurt other commercial centres.

In response to a letter Lewarne sent to Edmonton merchants about the matter, Gail Surgeon, manager of the city's Londonderry Mall, wrote: "Growth potential at our shopping centre has been cut drastically in the short term as well as in the long term."

Alberta's Oxford Development group wrote that Triple Five gets "items through council quicker than anyone else and (it) also gets larger concessions than anyone else."

Stewart Green Properties, operators of several Alberta malls, wrote that there's been "a noticeable effect on sales and traffic levels in all our Edmonton properties."

Lewarne said Triple Five was \$2 million behind in tax payments in Alberta and is asking for a \$20 million grant from Edmonton and additional grants from federal and provincial governments.

"If it's (the mall) as successful as they say, why do they need all those grants and why are they behind on taxes?" Lewarne said.

Despite repeated attempts by this paper, Triple Five spokesmen could not be reached for comment.

Road changes put on hold

Burnaby council will not take immediate action to change road patterns surrounding the Edmonds ALRT station as recommended in a recent planning department report.

Ald. Vic Stusiak successfully moved the report's recommendations be referred back to council for recon-

sideration two years after the ALRT is fully operational.

Stusiak said that if the report's recommendations were acted on now, it would be premature.

As a result, the proposal to have the planning report directed for discussion through the parks com-

mission and followed with a public meeting will also be postponed.

Council acknowledged that the membership of Burnaby council may change by the time the ALRT is fully operational and that the "new" council should be given the opportunity to act on the report at that time.

'Economy' delays Oakalla project

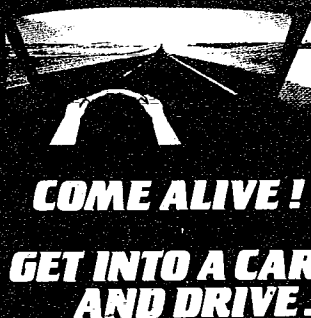
The provincial government has notified Burnaby council that there will be a delay in the development of the Deer Lake Project on

the Oakalla prison lands because of the "state of the economy."

In a letter to Mayor Bill Lewarne, Attorney

General Brian Smith said planning for the project is resuming but the original

schedule for replacement of the Oakalla facility has been delayed.



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Movie studio appealing

(Cont. from Page 1)

dustry puts money in people's pockets and the mall takes it out." Ald. Doug Drummond, a member of the Burnaby Citizens' Association, said his party's election campaign will not be influenced by the Alberta developers.

"The BCA has Burnaby's best wishes at heart. It's an old organization that's never been dominated by any large group of individuals or business interests and I don't think in the future it will be, either," he said.

Drummond said council hasn't formally rejected the mall because the developers have not presented a firm proposal to the municipality.

The alderman said he finds a movie studio more appealing than a mall.

"I would like Burnaby to

become the Burbank of the Lower Mainland," Drummond said. Stewart Shearman, of the newly-formed Burnaby Electors' League, said Triple Five's big bucks won't affect his party's campaign.

Shearman said he's not in favor of the mall, adding that it would "require a hell of an expense on road work."

Shearman said that if Triple Five tried to influence him with its dollars, he'd be even "more likely to tell them to get lost."

J. P. Daem, a likely aldermanic candidate who was affiliated with former mayor Tom Constable's "Independents" slate last election, said he favors the mall but he won't be a party to backroom deals with developers.

"I wouldn't take that kind of money," he said. "I have a problem with him (Stahl) demanding

there be a referendum. I have a problem with anyone making that kind of demand."

Daem said he would support the supermall because he sees "the Hastings corridor, Lougheed corridor, and Kingsway corridor as the three commercial corridors of Burnaby."

He questioned whether people will take the rapid transit line to Metrotown.

"What's so sacred about Metrotown?" he said. "Are we going to wait for the next 20 years for them (Metrotown's developers Daon) to make up their minds? Our shopping centres in Burnaby are a disgrace. I shop in Park Royal and Guildford."

The movie studio could go elsewhere in Burnaby, he said.

"Maybe the studio could go to Brentwood. Maybe Brentwood is past its prime," Daem said.

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