River Park; Saved for Posterity

After an astonishing and quite unnecessary series of contortions City Council on Monday night finally got around to approving the River Park project.

With the best grace it was able to salvage from the mess of the past couple of weeks, City Council accepted Mr. Eric Harvie's offer of $100,000 and a parcel of his own land in order that a real, natural park may be developed along the banks of the Elbow in South Calgary.

For what it has done, but certainly not for the manner in which it has done it, City Council has earned the thanks of the citizens of Calgary today and citizens of Calgary yet unborn.

Perhaps...for one can never be entirely sure about such things in this city...Calgary will now get its very first honest-to-goodness park. At the moment, it has no such thing, but perhaps in time and with the assistance of Providence, Calgary will boast a beauty-spot comparable, say, to Victoria's lovely Beacon Hill park.

There is no reason it shouldn't do so. The money is immediately available for a start, thanks to Mr. Alex Munro, the parks superintendent, will approach the project with delight and vigor. Never before has he had such a chance to create a beautiful natural retreat on such a large scale in such a favored setting.

Perhaps none of us will live to see this haven in its full-fledged loveliness, for man can do only so much and Nature must do the rest in her own good time. But it is not difficult to foresee the day when Calgarians in untold thousands will offer heartfelt thanks for River Park in the same way Londoners are unceasingly grateful for the incredibly lovely and peaceful parks scattered throughout that metropolis, Hyde Park, Regent's Park and Green Park to name a few.

Those parks, in land values, are utterly beyond price. Of course pieces of them could be sold, as certain aldermen want to sell pieces of River Park for fabulous sums...but any metropolitan London official who proposed such a scheme would never again be safe walking in the streets.

It was amusing, in a wry sort of way, to note the deep concern over parks exhibited in certain sections of City Council, especially "Glenmore" park. One would almost think that City Council had been ceaselessly straining at the leash to develop big, natural parks; instead of fiddling impotently with Glenmore for several years and with Shouldice for more than forty years.

If the recent controversy...out of which some aldermen emerge with no credit whatever...has accomplished nothing else perhaps it has sparked a sense of awareness, maybe even urgency, in regard to proper parks and Calgary's crying need for them.