

Long overdue

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To further accommodate the community centre, the sub-committee agreed that rather than including the revised figure in its capital estimates, which aren't approved until late February, that they would ask for the money as a first draw against the East Kildonan-Transcona 1986 land dedication reserve account, a quicker route to obtaining funds for the project.

In an interview with **The Herald** Councillor Anne Jarowski (Miles MacDonnell Ward), said the councillors agree that Melrose should have been upgraded long ago, but because the city has been in a restraint period, grants for upgrading have been put off.

"Melrose has been waiting years for this money, and has been putting up with a great many deficiencies in the meantime," she said. "They want to know how much longer they are going to have to wait."

The councillor praised Melrose Community Centre, which has 35 organized sports teams playing under the Melrose Missiles name. "It's a large well-used community centre. I always see such a wonderful camaraderie. The children and adults are there together. Too often the parents just drop their children

off, but at Melrose you see lots of parents. And you know, that's the secret to their success."

The money, Councillor Jarowski and Melrose representative Russell Malkokse agreed, would really only bring the building up to the minimum safety standards.

Malkokse said the civic properties estimate was earmarked to make changes to the building to eliminate the fire hazard, with no additional upgrading. He said the basement has six changing rooms running off a dead-end hallway. One of the first priorities of the project is to add a second stairwell and convert the six dressing rooms into two larger ones.

With the additional funds — \$50,000 from the community centre, and \$75,000 from the provincial government's Community Assets Program, the club will add a 3,700 square-foot banquet hall, main floor kitchen and canteen, washrooms and skate change area. In all, said Malkokse, the changes will serve to eliminate general use of the basement.

Funding from the city, province and club will only bring the total to around \$200,000, councillor Jim Ragsdill said at the meeting.

"Where are you going to get the other \$50,000?" he asked.

Malkokse told the committee that Melrose has applied for a Section 38, federal government make-work project grant, which would amount to about \$28,000. He said he was confident the remaining \$20,000 could be raised by the community centre.

The newly expanded building could be rented out to generate some income, he told the community committee.

Dave Dollis, a member of the sub-committee on parks and recreation, also assured his fellow committee members that Melrose would likely have no trouble finding \$20,000. He cited a great deal of enthusiasm within the community centre, and said that with a canvas of the community to solicit funds, bingos, and hall rentals, he "can't see this city ever having to come up with a penny more than your grant."

And, as a last resort, Malkokse said, the centre would also be willing to scale down their project to eliminate the possibility of a debt. He said the community centre had originally hoped to totally rebuild their facilities, but found the cost, about \$600,000 too high to ever hope to succeed. Instead, they have settled for a more modest expansion and renovation.