

APR 1 1909

Power Terminal Site and Per Transmission Route Pur- chased Cheaply.

CORPORATION METHODS WIL

First Successful Attempt to Secure New Property Without Prices Ye Soaring Skyward.

The city has practically completed the purchase of its high tension power transmission right-of-way within the city limits and of the terminal station site for the municipal power scheme. At an expenditure of a little over \$71,000 both the site and the right-of-way through Elmwood have been secured. The fact of the city having secured the property at that price is due solely to the adoption of the same methods that would have been used by the C. P. R. or any other large corporation desirous of obtaining an entry into the heart of the city.

This is the first time in Winnipeg that a civic deal of this size, involving so many parcels of property, has been closed without the knowledge of the pending purchase having come to the ears of the owners affected. The result has been that there has been no undue inflation of prices and the city has obtained the land at its actual market value.

Where Terminal Site Is.

The terminal site chosen is on the west bank of the Red river immediately to the southeast of the gas works, between Rachel and McFarlane streets. The property consists of lots 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 46, 47 and 48 in block 28. Lots 17 and 18 face on Rover avenue and form a river frontage. The city tried to get possession of the other two lots on the river adjoining those bought, but was unable to come to an understanding with the street railway company who own them. For that reason the six lots to the rear were purchased, the river lots giving a site for the heavy steel towers necessary to carry the transmission lines across the river. The power transformer station can, therefore, be situated farther back, giving plenty of room for bringing the wires from the top of the towers to the low elevation of the sub-station.

On the Elmwood side of the river the city secured a portion of a piece of unsubdivided property to the northwest of the J. Y. Griffin plant and from there the line strikes northeast

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the city secured a portion of a piece of unsubdivided property to the northwest of the J. Y. Griffin plant and from there the line strikes northeast diagonally to near the south end of Brazier street and there takes a slight angle to the east crossing the city limits near the junction of Roch street and Harrison avenue. From there to the crossing of the old C.P.R. main line the location has not been definitely decided upon.

How It Was Worked.

Talk to whom you will at the city hall, mayor, controllers, aldermen or officials, and you can get but scant information as to the arrangements for the proper right-of-way, the fact being that but very few of them have taken any very active part in the actual securing of the property. It has been a pet scheme on the part of certain members of the council from the start. Some time ago a motion was put through in council to the effect that Mayor Evans should be given the authority to secure the right-of-way through the city and he called in Controller Cockburn in conference. The services of three real estate agents, Messrs. Lowery, Norquay and Long were secured. The agents were given instructions to get options on several routes, working independently. The city was not to pay them anything for their services, the only remuneration being the ordinary commission that would be paid them by the vendors of the property. The final selection was to be the most suitable of the routes optioned. In order that there might be no objection raised by the agents on the score of commission it was agreed that they should pool receipts on the final selection.

Then there came the difficulty of getting the ready cash with which to buy these options. There was a caucus of the city council at which the matter was discussed and at the last regular meeting of the council the sum of \$15,000 was voted in various guises which would not cause comment. Be it said to the credit of the members of the city council that though they knew the purpose for which this sum was intended it never went beyond them. Then came the really fine work of those who were directing the purchase. Funds were deposited in the hands of trustees, bank managers it is said, and the property owners were approached to find what reduction they would give in the option prices for cash payments. Reductions of from 10 to 15 per cent. were obtained in many cases in this way. There are a few properties which were not secured but these are negligible and prices on them are practically fixed for expropriation proceedings by the figures paid for adjoining parcels.

And Nobody Leaked.

The important feature of the whole deal is that nobody "leaked" and this marks the first successful attempt of the city council to secure property in the same manner as is adopted by other large corporations. It is true that the securing of so many options in Elmwood created some comment and much speculation as to what was going on, but the options covered so much territory that even the wise ones were confused, giving rise to the supposition that a park was what was wanted. Mayor Evans and Controller Cockburn handled the deal through-

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