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Council to discuss shaw-Nee

Jamie Komarnicki

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With council being asked to look at buying the Shaw-Nee Slopes golf course Monday, several aldermen are questioning the wisdom of stepping in the middle of private negotiations between the golf course owners and a developer.

Meanwhile, a new letter sent to aldermen from the property's would-be buyer suggests the debate may be a moot point altogether, despite calls from many area residents for the city do something to preserve the green space.

Ald. Diane Colley-Urquhart will bring a motion before council on Monday to explore whether the city can buy the golf course in southwest Calgary with municipal, provincial and private funds, then use the land as a city facility.

But Ald. Ric McIver said he isn't convinced potential city ownership guarantees the land would remain green space.

"One needs to ask the question, should the taxpayers be buying a golf course at this time?" he added.

However, a letter obtained by the Herald suggests there might not be much for city council to debate.

Geo-Energy, which reached an unconditional agreement with the Shaw-Nee Slopes owner, Shaw Construction, has no plans to sell the property, a representative said in a letter sent to council Friday. The deal is expected to close next summer.

In the letter, lawyer Christopher Davis said the land is "no longer viable as a golf course." However, Davis also said Geo-Energy is committed to working with the city and surrounding community to work on the site redevelopment.

Ald. Bob Hawkesworth said a city purchase of the property just doesn't appear to be in the cards.

"It's not on a priority list, there's no money available for the city to acquire it, and Geo-Energy Enterprises has indicated they have no interest in selling it," he said. "Those seem to be pretty big barriers to going forward and trying to make it work."

jkomarnicki@theherald.canwest.com

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