

LOCAL NEWS



Melanie MacDonald is frustrated with the red tape her committee is going through with city council to get a monument built along Riverfront Trail.

Autumn MacDonald photo

Memorial honours missing women

AUTUMN MacDONALD
Observer Reporter

In the last 30 years 12 Quesnel women have gone missing or have been murdered.

Now, a group of women are lobbying city council for support to erect a monument in honour of those missing and murdered.

During a city council delegation meeting last week, Melanie MacDonald, Bev Faulkner, Jean Birch and Elaine Paterson presented council with their vision – a vision they've been working on for more than a year.

"Mary Agnes Thomas, Santokh Johal, Janice Hackh, Dorothy McCaughlin, Roxanne Thirara, Mary Jane Jimmy, Mary Dyck, Tiffany McKinney, Leah Faulkner, Deena Braem and more recently, Barb Lanes and Julie Oakley-Parker," MacDonald said.

"Those are the 12 women who have been murdered or have gone missing under suspicious circumstances."

MacDonald told council the Missing and Murdered Women's Memorial Committee

was asking for support to erect the monument at the end of Bowron Avenue along the Riverfront Trail.

"We are also asking the city plant and maintain flowers in the base of the monument each year," she said.

Committee members had first consulted with director of public works and engineering Jack Marsh who suggested the location on Bowron.

Total cost for the project is \$8,925 – this includes labour, material such as sand and gravel for the base of the monument, drainage, delivery and machine time for site preparations and setting of the monument.

No funding for the monument is being asked of the city.

The Committee is looking to fundraise and in-kind donations for their project.

Sept. 15, Coun. Ron Craigmyle made a motion that council support the installation of the memorial and approve \$500 from the contingency fund for the purchase of flowers.

Craigmyle's motion was seconded by Coun.

Sushil Thapar. No vote was taken.

Coun. Ron Paull then moved the decision to approve support be deferred until a more detailed plan is developed and funding has been determined.

That motion was seconded by Coun. Coralee Oakes and carried.

Staff will meet with the group and report back to council Oct. 20.

"We're disappointed," MacDonald said.

"But we're optimistic council will support our project."

MacDonald did, however express concern, over council's need for the Committee to specify funding, before they approve the desired site.

She says it's a bit tough to secure funds when the location is up in the air.

"But we'll be back on [October] 20th," she said.

"We're just getting through the red tape... if our asking for the flowers and help with maintenance is a deal breaker – we'll simply take it off the table."