

Hastings Park Conservancy
ParkWatch in Hastings Park
November 28, 2007

Disfigured Trees & Pattison Billboard in
Empire Bowl, Hastings Park

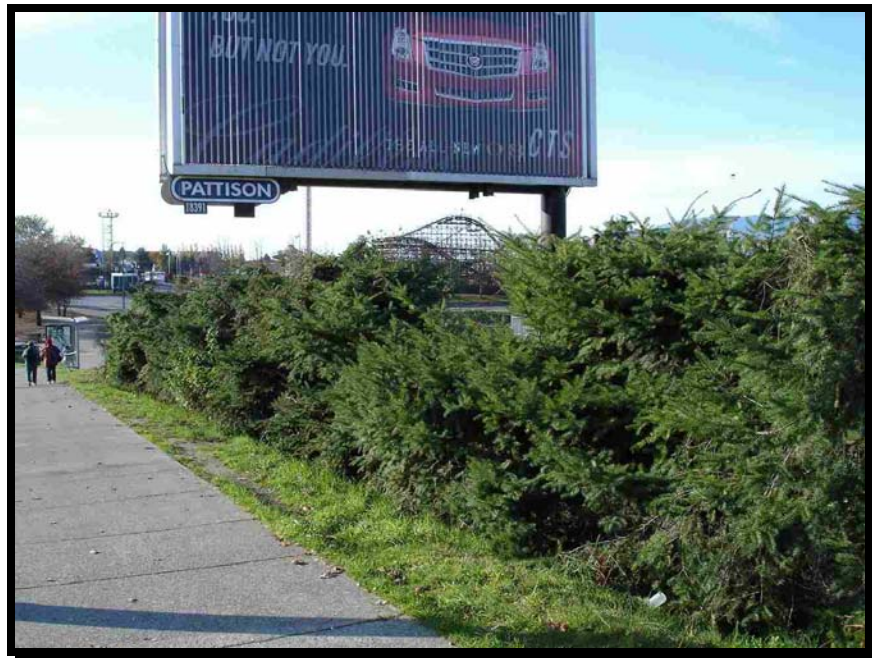


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Area	Observations / Remarks
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Empire Bowl

Structures &
Vegetation



Jim Pattison commercial billboard located in Empire Bowl, Hastings Park, southeast corner at Hastings and Cassiar St.

Empire Bowl is the only section of Hastings Park that is managed and maintained by the Parks Board, the rest of the park is at the hands of the PNE.

Evergreen trees planted as part of the greening of Hastings Park were severely cropped and disfigured by a contract company hired by the Pattison sign company to give better visibility to the commercial billboard.

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Perhaps, Jim Pattison, generous donor of \$1,000,000 for the restoration of Stanley Park, could spare a little money and a few trees earmarked for Stanley Park and divert them to Hastings Park. Laura Vallance, PNE spokesperson said "We didn't know the trees were going to be cut. It was at the request of the sign company. We explained there's a number of things involved and they (tree pruners) were very understanding. They said in future those policies will be followed."

The Conservancy asks, "What about now! What about remedial action for those trees".

The Conservancy has been unable to locate another commercial Pattison billboard in any other Vancouver park and particularly not in Stanley Park or Queen Elizabeth Park.

Why always Hastings Park?

The following letter was sent to Susan Mundick, Park Board Manager. The Conservancy will report on remedial action demanded and the outcome.

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October 30, 2007

Vancouver Park Board
2099 Beach Avenue
Vancouver, BC, V6G 1Z4

Attention: Susan Mundick, General Manager

Dear Madam:

I am writing on behalf of the Hastings Park Conservancy regarding the recent cutting of a row of maturing trees near the south-east corner of Hastings Park. For at least the second time, a landscape company recently topped these trees, apparently to improve the visibility of a billboard.

The trees were planted as part of the restoration of Hastings Park (Empire Bowl). The City issued sign permit SI403534 in June 2000 for this billboard, well after the landscaping was established. The permit was issued on the condition that the sign be removed at the end of the PNE lease, at that time an expiry of December 31, 2002. Other conditions were for existing trees and landscaping to be left in the same condition after erection of the sign and that the billboard be removed at the end of the lease period if requested by the Park Board.

Clearly, city staff gave consideration to the existing landscaping when the sign permit was issued. However, in the years since then, the topping of trees - at least twice - indicates that the billboard is incompatible with this site. Conditions of this permit have been violated and the permit is also well past its expiry.

We ask consideration for the following:

- remove the billboard, permit SI403534, with no new replacement billboard elsewhere on the Hastings Park site
- re-plant the same species of tree on this site
- remove the adjacent billboard, permit SI403532, also a time-limited permit

The topping of trees for the sake of third party advertising revenue for the PNE should not be at the expense of Hastings Park nor should it be a practice in any city park.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Georgina Nicholson
Hastings Park Conservancy Secretary/Treasurer

cc. Park Board Commissioners
PNE Board of Directors
Marnie McGregor, Hastings Park Project Manager