

THE RADIAL BILL

Third Reading Given to Premier's Enabling Legislation and Civic Assessment Dept. Notifies Property Owners That Yonge Street Reconstruction Is to Begin—Formal Agreement Soon to Be Signed

OBJECTIONS WAIVED BY RAILWAY COMPANY

Premier Drury's Radial Bill, as amended to facilitate the "clean-up" deal, was given third reading in the Legislature yesterday afternoon, with no discussion and without a dissenting opinion.

Within a week, if hopes are realized, the double-tracking and paving of north Yonge street will be under way, according to a statement made by Mayor Maguire last night.

Around the City Hall, in Hydro circles and at the Parliament Buildings there were many expressions of relief that at last the way was open for concluding the largest purchase of private power and traction properties in the Dominion of Canada. The recent acquisition of its street railway lines by the city of Detroit does not measure, in terms of dollars, as high as this purchase by the city of Toronto.

It should be only a matter of days before the formal agreement between the Hydro-electric Power Commission and the Toronto Railway Company is ready for execution. Before signing it Sir Adam Beck will likely forward it to the City Council for approval, and once that is given it will be signed by all parties. It will be some time, however, before the bonds covering the purchase will be ready for delivery, and pending this, R. J. Fleming, General Manager of the Toronto Railway Company, in a letter to Premier Drury, states that he is prepared to waive all objections to the city taking possession of Yonge street forthwith.

Mr. Fleming's letter, which is dated June 7, reviews the original offer made on December 3, 1920.

"Proceedings have been going on spasmodically from that date until the present time," he says, "but the end is not yet. I firmly believe that, had there been any keen desire manifested by the commission to have the transaction consummated, it could have been closed up in one-half the time that has already been spent upon it. I have secured the consent of my directors to say, as I do now, that as to any outstanding matters arising under the agreement, whether relating to title or otherwise, which cannot be settled between the solicitors for the respective parties within a time to be fixed by you, this company is prepared to leave all such matters to the final decision of yourself and the Hon. W. E. Raney, and to accept and promptly carry out such decision. The company is also willing to guarantee, by

means of a deposit of bonds forming part of the purchase price, the due carrying out of any such decision, the amount and terms of the deposit to be settled by you."

Mr. Fleming further states that the company is willing to embody the offer contained in his letter in a formal agreement, and concludes:

"With this letter forming part of the understanding between the company and the commission, I see no reason why the agreement cannot be signed and delivered at once, and just as soon as this has been done I am prepared to enter into an arrangement, on terms mutually satisfactory, with the commission and the city whereby, pending the carrying out of the agreement, the city can be put in a position to proceed with the double-tracking of Yonge street."

Mr. Fleming's letter means, in effect, that the Toronto Railway Company will give a supplementary undertaking to adjust all minor matters arising out of the purchase deal, and proceed at once with the execution of the main agreement between the Hydro-electric Power Commission and the Toronto Railway Company, waiving also all objection to the city forthwith taking possession of Yonge street and proceeding with the double-tracking and paving.

Works Commissioner Harris and General Manager Couzens of the Transportation Commission held a conference yesterday. Notices have been sent out by the Assessment Department to the owners of property on the west side of Yonge that the city will at once enter into possession of the strip of land necessary for the widening. Only two buildings north of Christ Church are yet to be moved, namely, a hardware store south of Chaplin crescent and the Bank of Montreal at the corner of Roselawn avenue.

So far as the Transportation Commission was concerned, there were yet three points to be taken up, said General Manager Couzens. First, the commission must get formal permission to go ahead on Yonge street. Second, the centre of the widened street must be cleared, by moving the Metropolitan tracks to the west. Third, the commission must know what the city intends to do with the portion of Yonge street lying between Farnham avenue and Heath street, where the widened portion commences.

A month's notice, only, is required before possession can be had of Christ Church, but it is probable sufficient width will be available by removing the steps on the east side of the church. The Transportation Commission is anxious to have a conference over the proposed loop at Lawton boulevard. It is pointed out that it would not be economical at present to operate the entire Yonge street service up to Stop 26.

No Time to Be Lost.

The Transportation Commission has all the rails and material necessary for the work in store on Merton street. Within an hour of permission being given by the city the commission will have its men at work. The intention is to start three gangs, one at either end and the other midway. The total distance is approximately 18,000 feet, and each gang should be able to excavate and concrete 600 feet a day. This will make a total of 1,800 feet daily, taking about two weeks. After the concrete is laid it will be left three weeks, to harden, and then the service can be resumed. The double-tracking will proceed somewhat in advance of paving on the east side.