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Last whistle for photos

Mural to be covered over

BY TONY ZERUCHA
SPECIAL TO CANSTAR

TRANSCONA

The new tenants of the former TD Canada Trust building at 200 Regent Ave. West want to give the public plenty of notice before they have to remove a mural on the building's exterior.

The decision was a tough one but dictated by the scope of the work needed to get the building's insulation up to a sufficient level, said a representative of the Operating Engineers of Manitoba Local 987.

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Photo by Tony Zerucha

Marc Lafond, business manager of the Operating Engineers of Manitoba Local 987, wants to give everyone plenty of time to take pictures of the mural before it's removed during renovations.

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The mural, which depicts two children watching a train, was painted in 1991 by artist Dan Sawatsky. Sponsored by the Transcona BIZ, it is on the east-facing wall.

The engineers' union should be moved in by late June, said business manager Marc Lafond. He said 10 staff will work there, conducting such business as collective bargaining, administration and assisting people interested in forming a union. They represent workers in heavy construction, industrial facilities, hotels and materials yards. Once settled, they will be active at local businesses, insurance providers and restaurants.

"We anticipate the repatriation of dollars into the local community to be fairly significant," Lafond said.

Lafond said after the union purchased the building last November, it discovered a few surprises. The building's Hydro bills were abnormally high and investigations showed there was minimal insulation and no vapour barrier. Significant work was needed.

Because interior work was well underway, the organization had few affordable options.

"To strip all the interior and put a pony wall around it would be uber-expensive

because we were already in the midst of the spruce-up," Lafond explained.

The best solution is to attach rigid foam insulation to the building's exterior followed by a coating of acrylic stucco, Lafond said. He is in the process of obtaining quotes for the job.

Unfortunately, that means the mural will be covered up, which Lafond would rather not do, but he feels there's no other option.

He wants to give the public notice so they can enjoy the mural before it is covered, which will likely be by Aug. 1.

"I wanted to reach out to the community and let them know in advance of that before that takes place," Lafond said. "I want to allow people to reminisce, take pictures, whatever they want to do.

"It's not because we don't like it. It's for cost-efficient and environmental reasons."



Photo by Tony Zerucha

Marc Lafond in front of the mural which will likely be covered over by Aug. 1.

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