

# South Frontenac hires second full-time building inspector

By Mark Kerr

After much debate that spanned two meetings, South Frontenac council decided to turn the current contract building inspector job into a full-time position.

Council debated the issue at the May 13 committee of the whole meeting and once again at the regular council meeting May 20. Councillors Larry York and John Fillion were the only two members to vote against the motion May 20. Mayor Gary Davison was not present at the meeting to cast his vote.

Chief building inspector Alan Revill recommended the hiring of a second full-time inspector. The department now employs a chief inspector, two full-time inspectors and an administrative assistant. Revill said in his report that South Frontenac compares very favourably with other townships in their levels of productivity.

For the last five years, the building department has hired part-time and contract inspectors. Revill said that new regulations have meant highly-trained staff members are necessary to complete inspections. Attracting and retaining top talent would be easier with a full-time inspector position, Revill told council.

Coun. Fillion said a downturn in housing starts in South

Frontenac meant hiring a second full-time inspector was unnecessary.

"With 14 new homes, I don't think the inspectors are rushed off their feet. You can't tell me the pool fences, garages and pellet stoves increase the work that much. The additions are very minor. Now you are going to go and build up an empire," he said.

South Frontenac clerk administrator Gord Burns responded to Coun. Fillion's "empire" comment.

"There is no way this is being recommended to simply build up the department," he said. "If we were trying to

build an empire, I could have jumped on the recommendation that the township hire a deputy clerk. But I said no at the time because it wasn't necessary.

"I know the [building] department extremely well and there is never more than one inspector in the office at one time; the other two are out doing inspections. It takes time to do a good inspection," Burns added.

Burns said that if South Frontenac noticed a decline in building permit requests, the inspector could be laid off with proper notice under the Employment Standards Act.

Deputy Mayor Bill Rob-

inson said he supported the creation of a full-time position based on the township lawyer's report that the building department has approximately 1,000 outstanding active building permit files. Lawyer Timothy Wilkin said the municipality's potential exposure to liability would be greatly increased if a person is shown to have suffered a loss that was a "reasonably foreseeable consequence of the municipality not maintaining an adequate system of inspections or enforcement."