

Town officials 'disappointed' over loss of truck centre

Independent & Free Press, Thursday, September 29, 2011

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property tax rates in the Greater Toronto Area and they're (Target) aware of that," said Krantz.

While Halton Hills Regional Councillor Jane Fogal said the Target decision was disappointing, at least the centre would be located in Halton Region, which still gets one-third of taxes, and it's within an easy commute for Halton Hills residents who could be hired.

According to Town Economic Development Officer Doug Penrice in a report to the council, said the only difference between the two properties was timing.

First Gulf executive vice-president David Carreiro agreed timing was the issue, pointing out the economics of the two properties were virtually the same with price for the Milton site believed to be around \$500,000 per acre— higher than First Gulf's price.

The difference, he said, was the engineering required on the sites with the Milton one being farther ahead. Target's timetable is short with a building required by the end of 2012, he explained.

Carreiro said the Town of Halton Hills and Halton Region were very accommodating, expediting the process for First Gulf and trying to give Target a comfort level to come here.

"We tried to indicate we would move mountains to make this happen," said Fogal, noting that rezoning on the property was accomplished in a week.

"I think in the end, it was just timing," Carreiro said.

Penrice noted Target was concerned by potential delays on the Halton Hills site such as the necessity to get minor variances to change landscaping and future waiting spaces requirements. Target, he said, feared uncertainty and potential public appeals. During the June meeting, two residents had objected to the Town decision.

"While assurances were given that these

could be dealt with in the future as required, Target still had reservations," said Penrice.

Calls to Target were not returned.

Generally, development of the 401 Corridor has been slow, primarily due to the slower economy said Town Chief Administrative Officer Dennis Perlin.

No doubt, he said, the planned upgrade of Steeles Ave., beginning next year and continuing to 2014, will help the marketing of the properties.

"It's in poor shape and doesn't present well," acknowledged Perlin.

But he said long-term potential of the 401 Corridor would continue to be marketed.

Fogal agreed. "We just came through the recession, and a Halton report on second quarter shows everything is down on the industrial side."

But she added, just this week Halton Region is considering a report on the construction of water and wastewater connections and roadworks on Steeles Ave. with financing from Calloway REIT, a mega retail centre of 100 stores at Trafalgar

Rd. and Steeles. Occupancy is planned for early 2013.

Fogal said Calloway is very serious about this Halton Hills location, and its construction bodes well for the future potential of the 401 Corridor.

"While it is disappointing that the Halton Hills site was not chosen (by Target), it did demonstrate to the business community that Halton Hills is "open for business" and can move complicated applications quickly through the process," Penrice concluded in his report. "The final site selection in Milton, a community that has a similar high cost structure for development demonstrates that companies do place a high value on a strategic location in the 401 Corridor."

Carreiro said the Steeles Ave. land is zoned industrial, and while deals, small or large, take time to put together, he is confident that First Gulf will market the site. There is strong interest in the 401 Corridor, he said, with its

location between 400 series highway interchanges.

"We're optimistic that we'll find someone," he said.

Penrice noted logistics companies are generating the most inquiries in the 401 Corridor and "this use is now the new reality."

Meanwhile in Milton, construction crews

are grading the Boston Church Rd. property, with a building permit already filed with the town. The building is expected to be in operation by late 2012 for shipping to the new Canadian Target stores in 2013- including the Zellers-converted Target in the Milton Mall.

—With files from Christina Commisso, Metroland Media Group

'While assurances were given that these could be dealt with in the future as required, Target still had reservations,'

—Town Economic Development Officer Doug Penrice on concerns Target had about potential delays on the Halton Hills site

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