

The ROCKWOOD Miller

Township Digest

Rockwood Ridge assumed

Almost 20 years after development began in the Rockwood Ridge subdivision at the south end of the village, the Township is ready to assume ownership of the infrastructure works, like the roads, sidewalks and underground services from the developer, the Rockwood Seaton Group, for the third and final phase of the subdivision.

The Town's consultant said the work will cost approximately \$25,000, and recommended getting \$15,000 in cash and a \$10,000 deposit from Seaton to cover the cost of deficiencies including boulevard sodding, curb and sidewalk cracks and catch basin clean-outs. At a recent meeting, Guelph/Eramosa Council voted to double the cash to \$50,000 with a \$10,000 deposit.

Noting the Township will not get stuck paying for any deficiencies because it holds a \$210,000 letter of

credit from Seaton, Mayor Chris White said they have an absolute responsibility to protect ratepayers, but must also have a level of reasonableness and not hold \$1-million if they only need \$50.

Jeremy Grant, Seaton's vice-president of planning and development, said he thought the original request for the \$15,000 cash contribution was "high". He said it is time for the Township to assume responsibility for the development, as the cost to Seaton is significant with no income, while the Township is getting its property taxes from the homeowners.

Infringement bylaw?

Not wanting to anger proud homeowners whose property improvements infringe on Guelph/Eramosa Township property, Council will investigate developing a bylaw to deal with the issue Township-wide, not just in the Rockwood

Ridge subdivision.

Some Rockwood Ridge homeowners have planted shrubbery and landscaped with rocks and concrete driveway edging which are on the municipal right-of-way, and could damage Township snow removal equipment. John Burns of R.J. Burnside and Associates Ltd., said the Township should get a legal opinion, and homeowner reaction, will be the big issue, particularly if the situation is not handled in a "diplomatic manner," as some homeowners have spent a lot of money to beautify their property and the community, and an undiplomatic approach would definitely result in "negative reactions."

Rockwood Councillor Doug Breen said some homeowners already see the boulevard as theirs, not the municipality's to look after, and as long as the planting or landscaping is not unsafe, or likely to cause damage to snow ploughs, the Township should develop a bylaw stating what can be done within the road allowance, with the caution that the Township will dig up the landscaping if it needs to get to a broken pipe on its right-of-way.



TIMS COMING? Guelph-based developer Robert Eilers plans to build a Tim Hortons restaurant on Alma Street in Rockwood on the site of the apartment building on the left. He also owns the house to the right and another parcel of land behind the existing Esso gas bar. — Frances Niblock photo

Tims in Rockwood?

For the third time in a decade, plans for a Tim Hortons restaurant have been presented to the Township for several properties on the north side of Alma Street, east of the Esso gas bar.

Guelph-based developer Robert Eilers' Alma Inc., wants to build a 3,000-square-foot sit down restaurant with a drive-through on commercially zoned lands fronting on Alma Street, with access from Pasmore Street North. Pasmore is currently an unopened road allowance owned by the Township, but Eilers wants Council to open the road allowance so it can be used as another entrance and exit to the Tim Hortons. The Ministry of Transportation will only allow a westbound right hand turn lane from Alma (Highway 7) into the property.

Guelph/Eramosa Township Mayor Chris White said Council first learned of the proposal several months ago, and got a few more details last Monday when Eiler and his planning consultant

appeared before Council. White said an apartment building to the east of the Esso station, which used to be a restaurant, would be torn down to make way for the Tim Hortons. Eilers' consultant said they would cover all of the costs to improve Alma Street and Pasmore Street. Council passed a resolution asking its planner, lawyer and other Township staff to investigate Eilers' request.

White said the site is already zoned for a restaurant, so the only municipal involvement is the request to open Pasmore Street. Council voted to have the Township planner and staff investigate the feasibility of opening Pasmore Street, which has been on the books since 1856. "If this road was to proceed, it would be at the developer's expense," White said, adding historically, the Township has sold unopened road allowances to developers, but that can't happen here because there is an existing business and other property owners who also use the unopened road.

Linda Noyle, who lives on Highway 7 and works at the Esso gas bar on Alma Street, does not want to see a Tim Hortons open up next door. "If you ever go to any place that's got a Tim Hortons, any plaza, all you

get is traffic congestion, so any businesses in this area are not going to get any extra business, they're just going to have a difficult time for any of their customers to get in because of the traffic backups," Noyle said on Friday.

Neighbour John Thatcher, who grew up two three doors away and lives two doors away from the proposed site, is also worried about noise, litter and increased traffic from a Tim Hortons. "I don't think it's a good thing — I won't be going there for coffee," Thatcher said on Friday.

Glen Goldring of Erin, who is a regular Esso gas bar customer, said he'd get coffee at a new Tim Hortons, which he thought would be "quite popular." "Maybe the people in town won't like it at first, but I'm sure they'll all be here using it... this road is full of traffic — it's bad — but it has nothing to do with a Tim Horton's — it won't change traffic," Goldring said.

Eilers' planning consultant, Bruce Donaldson said his client owns three properties on Alma Street — two to the east of the Esso gas bar and one property at the rear of the Esso property which would allow access to Pasmore Street, making the opening of the road allowance key to the proposal.

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