

Ag. Society plans for future home

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Acton Tanner

The Acton Agricultural Society is currently seeking quotes for a new building at Prospect Park to house its exhibits for the Fall Fair.

As the Town builds a new arena and community centre in Acton East and plans to demolish the existing arena in Prospect Park, the Society is gathering information and costs for a new building so the issue can be put to a vote by Society members.

A special committee of the Board of Directors of the Agricultural Society recommends that a new building be constructed beside the existing block structure, but Agricultural Society spokesperson Janis Fread said there is some reluctance to proceed.

"There's still a lot of discussion needed. A lot of people are very hesitant about taking this big step so we have to make sure we have all of the information and all of the facts and figures and then make the decision," Fread explained last Thursday.

"The only vote we've taken so far is that we will proceed with the option of building our own permanent structure. When we get all the information on where we can locate it and how much it will cost, we will take a vote on yes or no."

Fread also noted that the project might not be feasible if the new building had to be constructed somewhere other than on the existing arena site because there would be additional costs for hydro, water and other services.

Engineering reports indicate the block building attached to the arena is in good

shape and could be saved. That building is currently home to the Acton Seniors Centre and will be vacant when the seniors move to the new arena and community centre in the fall of 1997.

Fread said they would be looking at a pre-engineered structure that could be erected fairly quickly but they need to get more quotes on the cost of a new building because the two they have received are widely different.

Paul Stover, the Town's acting Recreation and Parks Director, said the Town supports the Agricultural Society staying in the park, because "it's one of the best fairs going," but the Agricultural Society's plans would have to be part of a larger plan for the park's future.

"The Master Parks Plan talked about de-intensifying the use of that park and making it more passive and that would bring a number of other issues into play, including providing sports fields in a different location if they were to be removed from Prospect Park," Stover explained Thursday.

Stover also questioned if re-building on the site of the old arena is the best location.

"It blocks off the view of the lake and we also have to decide the future of the poultry barn, so before we say let's put up a big new structure on the site of the existing arena we have to decide if that's the optimum place in the park, or is there a better place?" Stover said.

Stover will continue to meet with the Agricultural Society and will work on a feasibility study for future park development.



CELEBRATION WEEKEND: Canada Day celebrations started early this year, at Saturday morning's trunk sale where there was birthday cake and flags everywhere. Above Beryl Harding, second from left and Joyce Tilson enjoy some cake while Andrew Menary and Jack Carpenter display a Canadian flag. (Eve Marlin photo)

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