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## New rink planned for Sinclair Ave.

### Johnny Bower Gardens to be ready by November

It's not exactly an Iowa cornfield, but two Georgetown residents are convinced if they build it, they will come. Cindy Bower, daughter of former Maple Leaf goalie Johnny Bower, and Adam Bennett are the partners behind a new hockey training facility to be located on Sinclair Avenue behind Petro Canada. They hope to have construction begin in July and the rink is expected to be ready by November.

The facility, to be called the Johnny Bower Gardens Training Centre, will include a 75 per cent ice pad (65 feet by 140 feet) and a 3,800 square-foot exercise and therapy area.

The rink will be the home to Adam Bennett Hockey Fundamentals, Cindy Bower Power Skating, Johnny Bower Goaltending School and a hockey school operated by Olympian Geraldine Heaney. It will also be home to a year-round three-on-three hockey league.

"First and foremost, it is a training centre,"

Bennett said. "But it will also add to minor hockey programs and provide additional ice time and practice times. It's a win-win situation for everybody."

Allan O'Neill, economic development officer for the Town of Halton Hills, said the facility needs only site plan approval before breaking ground. He said it will benefit the town by creating jobs and helping meet the high demand for ice time.

"It provides a couple of extra ice surfaces and at no expense to taxpayers. It will be complementary to what we've got rather than be in direct competition (with town facilities)."

Bennett, a former NHLer, was a graduate of Bower's skating program and the two have worked together for the last four years. It was the lack of available ice time that led them to idea of building their own rink.

"We were traveling from one rink to another," Cindy Bower said. "Sometimes we would be in four rinks in one day."

The other benefit of having their own facility is access to prime hours. Bennett was operating Hockey Fundamentals at 7 a.m. on

weekdays while Bower had parents pulling their children out of school for lessons.

A company called Mind to Muscle will operate a sports therapy and medicine clinic, which will bring everything the player needs under one roof. It's quite the change from the days when the man whom the facility will be named after played the game.

"We used to get a letter from Punch (Imlach, Maple Leaf coach) before training camp," Johnny Bower said, "telling us we'd have to be able to do 25 sit-ups, 25 knee bends and 25 push-ups and run for two miles."

The Hall of Fame goaltender knows the game has changed and players have to be in top physical shape. He said the training facility will help them improve and is thrilled to lend his name to it.

"It's a great honour to have my name on this," he said.

Bower and Bennett met with user groups last week to outline their plans and received support for the project.

"Any ice time, no matter what kind, is going to help," said Hal Pells, president of Georgetown Minor Hockey, which has had to turn away players in recent years. "It's limited from our standpoint because it's not a full rink. We might be able to move our junior and senior tykes there and that will free up some times but we'll have to see to what extent it will help once we sit down with Adam and Cindy and see what times are available."

Ice time will also be made available for figure skating, shinny and private rentals.

Plans for the training centre include a second ice pad to be added but Bennett and Bower will see how the first ice pad is received before moving forward with the second phase. The first phase is expected to cost between \$2-2.5-million.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer



Former NHLer Adam Bennett of Georgetown (left) joined Cindy and Johnny Bower at the site of the proposed Johnny Bower Gardens Training Centre on Sinclair Ave. Tuesday. Photo by Herb Garbutt

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