Downtown merchants to meet to develop business strategy

By RICHARD VIVIAN
The Champion

The future of a downtown without Quality Greens is the hot topic of a special meeting between merchants and the mayor tonight.

Merchants are concerned about the impact of losing an anchor tenant in the downtown core, said Jacquelyn Garrard, coordinator of the Downtown Business Improvement Area, which is organizing the meeting.

Quality Greens officially closed November 3 after 20 years of business.

"We're going to try to turn the negative of losing an anchor store into a positive," said Ms Garrard.

"We have been through a hard time with the construction (on Main Street) for the last little while and a lot of businesses have suffered. However, let's move forward. We have a great downtown. Let's use it. Let's promote it."

Store owners have been asked to attend the meeting — slated for 6 p.m. at Hugh Foster Hall — to share ideas about how the downtown can recover from the loss.

"The impact downtown (of losing Quality Greens) is what we make it. It's not the end. It's a step off to a new direction," continued Ms Garrard.

"Whatever goes in there (Quality Greens location) needs to be a strong business; needs to be someone willing to participate in the downtown core."

Mayor Gord Krantz and Andrew Siltala, Milton's economic development officer, are also scheduled to take part in the meeting.

"We thought we'd go right to the top for economical and planning development questions. We don't want to try and answer those without any background information" Ms Garrard said of inviting Town officials.

"We want everything out in the open. We want to move ahead as a community, as a group."

Can't find affordable housing?

There's help for those who can't find affordable housing in the Milton area — the Housing Help Centre.

The centre offers a variety of housing information in the local area, including vacancy listings, search assistance, tenant rights and responsibilities and follow-up support.

A free vacancy listing service is also available for landlords.

For more information, house seekers and landlords can contact Tara at the Housing Help Centre at 1-866-442-5866, ext. 7142, or on-line at www.region.halton.on.ca.