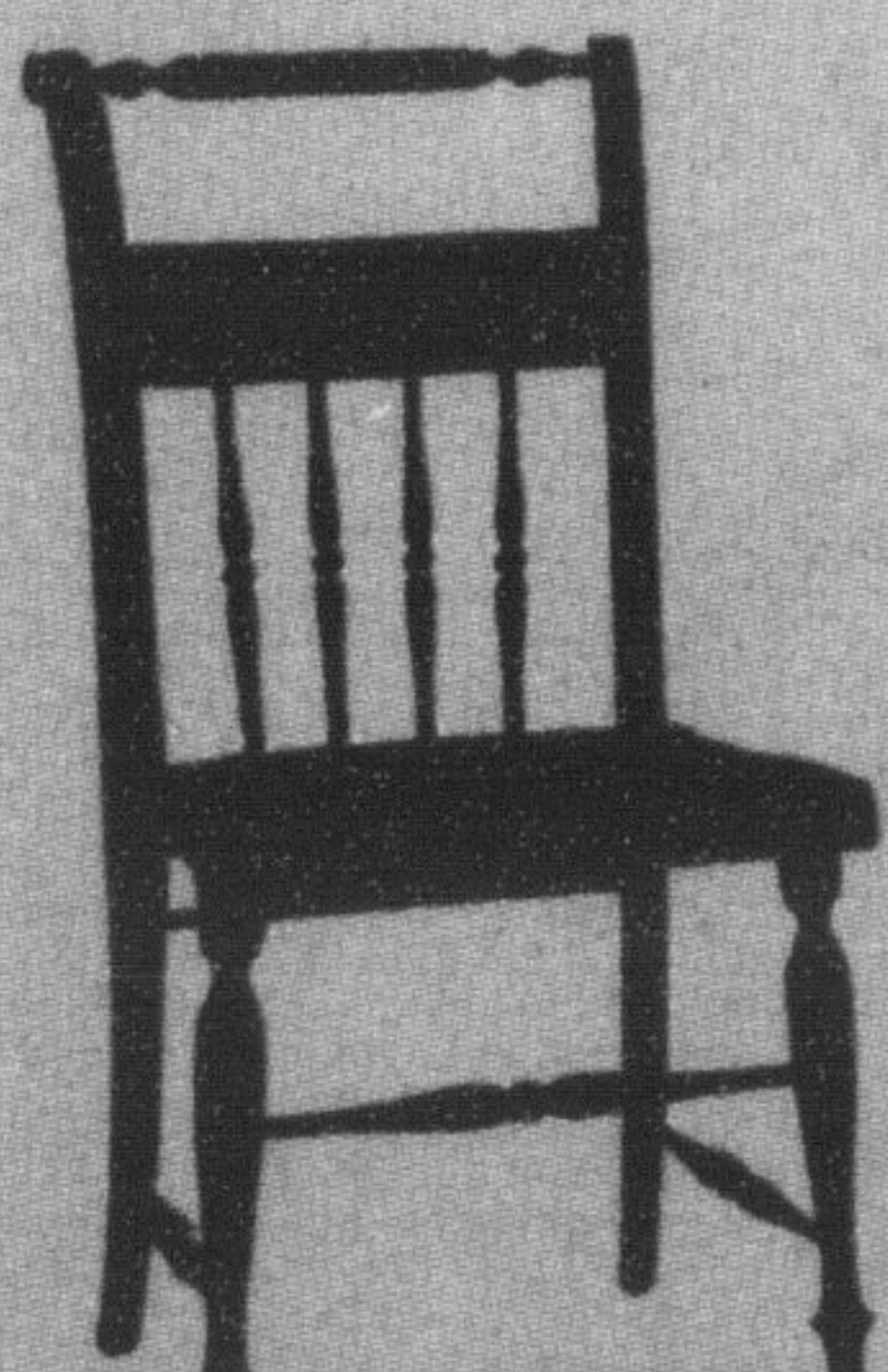




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Canadian Tire looks to build major gas bar on Market Dr.

By **JASON MISNER**
The Champion

A first-of-its-kind gas bar development proposal from Canadian Tire could be serving hurried Milton motorists by the fall.

Scott Arbuckle, a Mississauga-based planning consultant for the giant automotive/retail chain, unveiled construction plans to Milton's planning and administration committee last week that would see services offered beyond what a typical gas bar may provide.

Committee members won't vote on the plan until a technical review report is completed.

The proposal, which would require a zoning amendment, would see a rebuilding of the current Canadian Tire gas bar at 20 Market Dr. The 31,000-square-foot store located on the south side of the property will likely be relocating this year to the 313,000-square-foot power centre at the southwest corner of Steeles Avenue and James Snow Parkway. The gas bar will stay on Market Drive.

The company is looking to build an approximately 11,000-square-foot building that could include a drive through component for a restaurant, perhaps a coffee shop, as well as other retail uses, like a video store or a dry cleaning depot, in addition to offering standard perishable and non-perishable food items.

A car wash is also proposed for the site.

Canadian Tire stores and gas bars operate independently of each other. There are numerous stand-alone gas bars owned by Canadian Tire across Canada.

"The overall concept is to provide convenience-related uses under one roof," Mr. Arbuckle said in an interview. "People have very limited time these days. The entire concept is directed at convenience. None of the tenants have been determined."

In a best-case scenario, construction could start in the spring with a fall opening.

Part of the unique building design is to recognize the location is considered a gateway into Milton, Mr. Arbuckle said. Many gas bars have a small building space and lots of asphalt. This proposal would create an eye-pleasing building, he said.

"The idea is to produce architecture of some prominence," Mr. Arbuckle said.

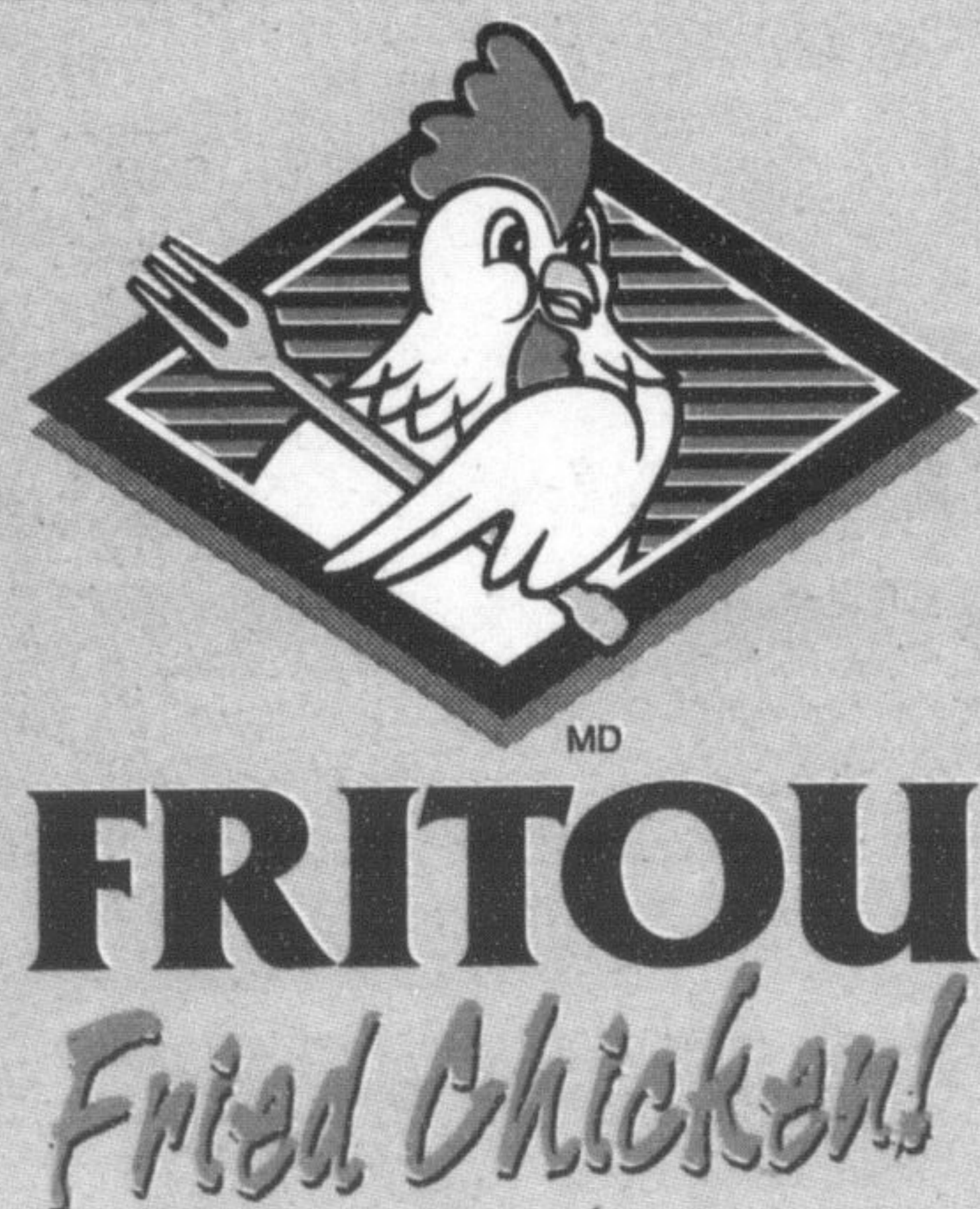
Also, he said what makes this kind of development attractive is people don't have to drive around town for different services, thus helping protect the environment. Having more services under one roof helps reduce traffic and the smog caused by vehicles stopping and going, he noted.

Meanwhile, the 14-year-old Canadian Tire to be re-located to the power centre will be four times the size of its current store, with more garage bays to service vehicles, said store dealer Drew Mudge. "It will be a more open concept, with wider aisles, larger product assortment, a brighter environment and easier to navigate," he said. "Milton has been very good to all of us."

More than 100 employees may be hired at the new location.

It's not clear what will happen to the vacated Canadian Tire building on Market Drive.

Jason Misner can be reached at jmisner@miltoncanadianchampion.com.



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