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Derby Brown



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# Proposed First Capital mall facing plenty of opposition

By Melanie Hennessey  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Local developers and residents are sending a loud and clear message to the Town — they don't want to see a shopping centre built on the north-west corner of Bronte Street and Derry Road.

Several individuals shared this sentiment at a public meeting held by town council February 26 on an Official Plan amendment regarding the Town's retail commercial demand study, which recommends where new shopping space should and shouldn't be located in Milton.

While the original study recommended against accommodating First Capital's proposal for a retail centre containing a Sobeys store and commercial, retail and restaurant uses at Bronte Street and Derry Road, council passed a motion last year to make way for up to 11,800 square metres on the property. That information has now been included in the proposed Official Plan amendment.

This raised the ire of lawyer Gerald Swinkin, who spoke at the meeting on behalf of

Manaman Inc., which owns property at the corner of First Line and Louis St. Laurent and intends to build a commercial development there.

He suggested that First Capital change its name to "First Cannonball."

"If approved, this proposal will blow a huge hole in the planned commercial fabric for this town," he said.

Alan Patton, who appeared on behalf of Loblaws Properties Ltd., shared similar sentiments.

He dubbed the development as "premature" to the town's needs and cited concerns with First Capital's potential impact when it comes to protecting the downtown core.

Downtown business owner Peter Haight said it seems that the "box store wars" are increasing.

"We already feel a pinch on Main Street," he said. "They (box stores) do steal the traffic on the street."

And local resident Marla Marnoch emphasized that the original study recommended against the First Capital development and urged council to "listen to the experts."

"We don't want this develop-

ment," she said.

First Capital's representative, Patrick Devine, then took the floor. He said he thinks it's critically important for council not to confuse good, long-term planning with commercial competition.

He also pointed to the updated retail commercial demand study, which indicates the development can be accommodated in Milton.

In addition to the First Capital plans, the proposed Official Plan amendment also makes way for several other developments, including an expansion of the Crossroads Shopping Centre and a commercial development in Milton Heights near the corner of Third Sideroad and the realigned Tremaine Road.

The Town's consultant and legal counsel, in conjunction with Town staff, will now review the comments received at the public meeting. A finalized Official Plan amendment is expected to go before council at its March 26 meeting for consideration.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at [mhennessey@milton-canadianchampion.com](mailto:mhennessey@milton-canadianchampion.com).

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