

# Wal-Mart seeks zoning change for expansion

By Melanie Hennessey  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Milton's Wal-Mart is looking to get into the grocery market in a bigger way.

The local outlet has applied to the Town for a zoning bylaw amendment to allow a 60,000-square-foot expansion of its store, of which 47,000 square feet is proposed to be dedicated to a food section.

Currently, the store has a 10,000-square-foot grocery section.

A public meeting on Wal-Mart's plans was held Monday by the Town's administration and planning committee.

While no residents spoke, Wal-Mart representative Prakash David used the opportunity to discuss the expansion. He told the councillors around the table that the food component of Wal-Mart stores has been well received in Canada.

"It really provides one-stop shopping," he said. "It's very convenient."

Laurie McPherson, who also appeared on behalf of Wal-Mart, said the grocery section would help recapture some of the 'outflow', or residents who've been leaving town to shop.

"It will round out the uses at the Crossroads Centre," she said.

Ward 3 Councillor Jan Mowbray said she'd like to see Wal-Mart buy products from local farmers to sell in its

store.

David pointed out that Wal-Mart stores do carry products from Ontario and Canada, noting the company is actually the largest purchaser from Canadian suppliers.

Ward 4 Councillor Paul Scherer voiced his concern with the lack of sidewalks leading to the Crossroads Centre.

He suggested staff negotiate a funding agreement with Wal-Mart and Crossroads to pay for installing sidewalks down Steeles Avenue from Thompson Road to the shopping centre entrance.

"I don't see why the taxpayers of Milton should have to bear the brunt of those costs," he said.

Ward 2 Councillor Mike Boughton pointed out that sidewalks are also needed on James Snow Parkway from Crossroads toward Main Street.

In the end, the committee supported directing staff to pursue all options for funding the installation of sidewalks to the entrance of the shopping centre.

Once staff has had a chance to further review the proposal, a technical report that recommends approving or denying the plans will go before town council for consideration.

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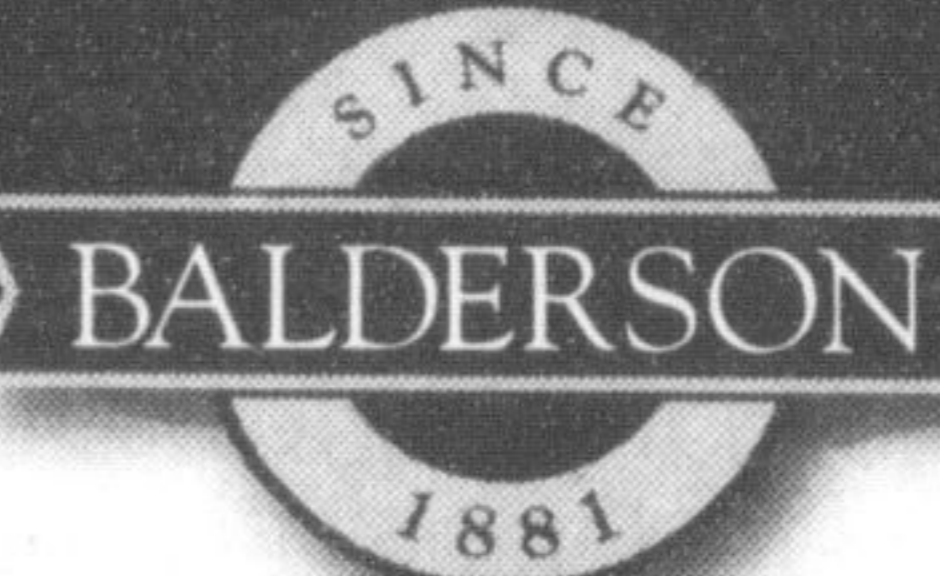
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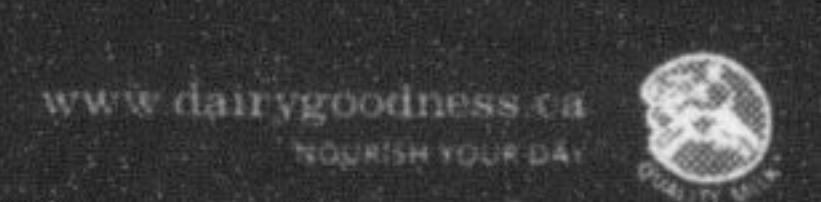
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