

Committee approves rezoning for condo

By Tim Foran
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

It's better to plan for themselves rather than have the Ontario Municipal Board do it for them.

That was the rationale behind Milton's planning committee's decision Monday night to approve the rezoning of a seven-acre property on Main Street in the east end of town to allow for the continued processing of a condominium development totalling 312 units.

Milton's official plan already envisioned such high density residential uses for the site, but nearby residents said the rezoning should be turned down because the development proposal would add traffic to an already clogged Main Street and James Snow Parkway intersection.

However, the rezoning passed on a narrow 3-2 vote at the committee, with local urban councillors Greg Nelson and Paul Scherer voting against the request. Milton council will have the final say at its next meeting January 26 when it votes on a bylaw that if approved will finalize the rezoning.

The proposed development for the property, located at the southwest corner of Main Street and Sinclair Boulevard, is similar to the Maple Crossing condominiums immediately to the northwest at Main and Maple Avenue. Both are by the same developer, Sutherland Development Group.

The Maple Crossing development was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) in 2006 after the Town of Milton initially turned down the proposal.

Mayor Gord Krantz said not supporting the rezoning for the new development would be "foolhardy."

"I do not support planning at the OMB," he mayor said.

He argued the OMB's approval of the Maple Crossing development allowed for some "screw-ups" in the final design of the project.

"If we're going to screw up, let's do it ourselves," Krantz commented, tongue in cheek, on the new development.

Regional Councillor Colin Best, who represents the area, also voted in favour of the rezoning. He said it's important to maintain input on how the development is built and to use the proposal as an opportunity to study traffic along Main.

"We're going to have to look at this whole area and this is the process to do that," Best said.

Best said he's planning to push for two roads projects to help alleviate traffic pressure on Main, especially the left turn lane to James Snow Parkway leading to the Hwy. 401 eastbound ramp.

The first would be an extension of Main Street to Trafalgar Road, which would allow eastbound commuters to bypass James Snow and get on the 401 at Trafalgar.

The second is to provide an access road to James Snow from the Bristol Park subdivision immediately south of the proposed condominium lands.

Currently, traffic from the entire subdivision is funnelled onto Main Street, as there are neither access roads to Thompson Road to the west nor James Snow Parkway to the east, and the south side is blocked by the CP rail tracks.

Best said the addition of on ramps to the 401 from Steeles Avenue to relieve traffic north of Main Street was a non-starter.

"Unfortunately, the MTO (Ministry of Transportation) would never agree to it," he said.

During Monday's public meeting on the rezoning proposal, a number of area residents described their difficult morning commutes out of town.

"In the morning, it's a disaster already trying to get out because of traffic," said Lori Zozzolotto, a resident of Sherwood Road.

Another nearby resident, Valerie Van Niesen of Hampshire Way, said traffic has increased considerably since she moved to Milton a few years ago.

"I know a few people who moved to Milton in the past year and they are sincerely regretting it," she said.

"They didn't know what they were getting into in regards to the traffic."

The proposed development is for six, four-storey apartment buildings, geared to empty nesters and entry-level homebuyers, said Scott Sutherland, of Sutherland Development Group.

There are two other vacant properties to the east and west of Sutherland's site, totalling about 13 acres. All three are owned by local Milton landowners, Cancast Inc.

Scherer said he couldn't support Sutherland's proposal until seeing a

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Correction

A story that appeared in Wednesday's *Champion* about a presentation made to the Halton Region's health and social services committee seeking government support for Transitions for Youth (TFY) contained incorrect information.

The presenter, Joe Potter, was representing TFY staff, who are members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

As previously reported, Transitions for Youth is set for closure February 27. The agency's intention is to work with its funders to hopefully see its programs divested to other agencies.

The *Champion* apologizes for the errors and any inconvenience they may have caused.

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