

Police Commission Decides To Co-operate

Agree To Submit Requested Figures

The York Regional Police Commission Monday morning was persuaded by Chairman Judge William Lyon to co-operate and try to give the York Regional Council firm figures on renovations, furnishings and equipment necessary in the proposed purchase of the Newmarket Office Specialty Building.

The commission wants the building to house the regional police headquarters, but had its request turned down earlier this year by the regional council.

The regional council engineering committee held up a recommendation on the Office Specialty purchase when firm final cost figures weren't available.

The police commission agreed to the regional council's renewed request for firm figures, but commission members entered into a long discussion first.

During the discussion, Markham Councillor Harold Lawrie, a commission member, drew back just at the last moment before he appeared to be getting into the idiot calling exchange going on the last few weeks between Newmarket purchase proponent Ray Twinn, councillor from Newmarket, and members of council who have so far opposed the Office Specialty purchase.

Councillor Lawrie remarked that the Newmarket purchase had been shot down in council "by three or four," then hesitated and stopped speaking.

"You'd better stop there. You'd better not use that word again," said Councillor Twinn.

"It's a foursome. You might as well make it a fivesome," said Twinn, apparently referring to the council exchange the week before over Twinn's idiot remark.

"I guess I better stop there," said Lawrie.

Commissioner Gordon Cook last year's warden of York County, interrupted to predict the region council engineering committee "will fight this through right to the last ditch."

Chairman Lyon said an engineering committee blockage of the Newmarket purchase "is fine with me. Then we'll get a new million dollar building."

There was more discussion of the savings the police commission members felt will be achieved through buying the Office Specialty Building on Prospect Street in Newmarket.

Ontario Police Commission Advisor Jack Taylor said development of the proposed headquarters at Newmarket would release 15 additional constables for field work.

He said this would be accomplished through closing the separate Whitchurch, Aurora, Newmarket and King Police Stations and releasing three of the four round-the-clock office staffs from office duty.

Councillor Twinn estimated this would mean an effective economy of \$150,000 a year.

Commissioner Cook started the discussion by saying there were a couple of things he wanted to get said, after watching the police headquarters debates in regional council.

"In all my years, I never saw such a sight in my life."

"They are using the police commission for a political football."

"I want the complete police commission to make a presentation to regional council before this show goes on again."

"Until I'm assured of that, I won't vote for putting anything more before the council," said the veteran of many years of municipal politics in the former York County.

"We're getting completely off on the wrong track," said Cook.

Commissioner Stewart Rumble, another veteran of municipal politics and also a former county warden, disagreed.

"Each individual request will be decided on its own merit, whether or not we appear before the council," said Rumble.

Cook said there was considerable discussion of a \$300,000 limit on a finished headquarters in the Office Specialty Building, according to what he remembered of discussion during and after the last meeting of regional council.

"The only way the problem can be solved is for the police commission to meet (secretly behind closed doors) in committee with council."

"Otherwise there's no use going back. If the price isn't right, it still won't be approved in council," said Cook.

Twinn gave assurance the Office Specialty Building was still available.

"I don't think we should be thinking about what went on in council," said Rumble.

Police Chief Bruce Crawford said he understood purchase of the Office Specialty Building would be approved by regional council if the cost stayed under \$300,000 and didn't go one dollar over.

Twinn said the \$300,000 limit hadn't been fixed by council, it was only the opinion of several members of council. He totalled up his own cost estimates, adding them to the \$210,000 building purchase price, and indicated it was his opinion the \$300,000 limit could be observed if the cost of communications and equipment wasn't included.

"I'm told the furnace is already in. I wouldn't put money on any part of this at this moment," said Cook.

"I understand some members of council have seen a letter from Bowman offering a new building for \$16.50 per square foot. That would mean only \$230,000 for a new building."

"The council isn't going to vote for anything until we make up our mind on something and show we're ready to go all the way to an appeal to the Ontario Police Commission. This is ridiculous," said Cook.

Provincial Advisor Taylor said the required 25,000 square foot floor space building, if it were of the same construction and type as recently built in Oakville, would cost roughly a million dollars, not including land and furnishings. There would also be an extra \$25,000 cost for communications of the type recently installed in Oakville and Oshawa.

"What isn't mentioned in the letters the councillors have is the security area, cells, etc.," said Taylor, estimating a new building would cost roughly \$320,000 to \$350,000 per square foot.

Taylor said he had his square footage cost estimate from a man whose specialty is designing police buildings.

"When they talk of \$16 per square foot, it's out of proportion altogether," said Taylor.

"I would like to see that proved to council, even though it would cost a few thousand dollars to do it," said Cook.

"There were a couple of people who voted for that resolution (the Office Specialty purchase) just to get it off the regional council floor and get home. That was a couple of mayors, and they're not going to vote for Office Specialty when a final purchase resolution comes up," said Cook.

Judge Lyon said, "It's our duty to go ahead and see how we can assist the commissioner (of engineering)."

Twinn said the commission should leave out the cost of communications equipment, since the equipment would be portable to any permanent headquarters if built.

Police Chief Crawford concurred he hoped the communications equipment could be built so it could be moved, although normally such equipment was designed and built right into a building.

Advisor Taylor pointed out there was no provision in the commission's budget for \$28,000 worth of communications equipment, and that such cost would have to be included in the purchase price of the building.

Taylor also pointed out there were some items in the Office Specialty renovations for which it would be difficult to fix a firm price. He listed as examples the cost of installing sanitary drainage and electrical services for the cell area, under the cement floor.

The cells would be units moved in, having a steel top and sides. In a new building cells would normally be of cement block construction, so the cells installed at the Office Specialty building wouldn't be movable to a new building.

Cook said again he felt dialogue was necessary between the commission and council, and that letters back and forth were useless.

The commission ended up with a motion asking the chief of police to provide the necessary information on furnishings, renovations and equipment to Engineering Commissioner Denne Bosworth. They also agreed to seek a meeting with regional council when it next meets March 25, as recommended by Commissioner Cook.

The police commission Monday also discussed life insurance and prescription drug insurance for members of the police force.

Representatives of the Mutual Life Assurance Company of Canada appeared at the meeting, explaining the company now has policies for regional employees and some of the former smaller police departments.

The plan was for life insurance of about 1 1/2 times annual earnings, or \$15,000 per man, being two-thirds paid for by the region.

Commissioner Rumble said a call for insurance proposals should be made.

Judge Lyon said he understood the wage agreement with the police association called for the same insurance as the regional employees had.

Chief Crawford said the commission would have to soon get into the matter of the drug plan, since it was provided for in the wage agreement and wasn't yet in force.

The insurance representatives said retroactive coverage for drugs could be provided, but not retroactive life insurance coverage.

Commission Secretary Brian Ward was asked to provide the necessary information on life insurance for consideration at the next commission meeting March 22, with the chief of police checking with the association about the acceptability of the Metropolitan Life proposal.

Headquarters Deadlock Continues—Region Dodges Confrontation

(Continued from Page 1) \$100,000 more than the proposed temporary Office Specialty building that is 22 years old.

"I want to see competitive prices before I approve of anything. Establishing a site at this time spoils the advantage of being able to get competitive bids for a combination of site and building," said Rowe.

He added that he didn't want the region to lose the opportunity of developing the York Manor farm property without cutting it up.

Newmarket's Twinn rose to counter Rowe's argument, saying he had the opinion of an architect experienced in the design of police buildings, and that a new building for the region was going to cost a million dollars.

Richmond Hill's Plaxton said he opposed the York Manor site, because it was just the same as the Office Specialty property, being too far removed from the majority of police work.

He reiterated that he was opposed to a Newmarket location and was convinced the headquarters should be further south.

That's where the bulk of the population, assessment and industry is, and where the bulk of the expansion is going to be, he said.

He stressed his argument that the region should establish its government centre in the south to stop the northern expansion of Metro.

"Don't underestimate the political power of Metro. The number of their Legislature members alone is almost enough to push through any annexation."

"It's the wrong location, will continue to be wrong, and will become more evidently wrong as time goes by," said Plaxton.

"It's a new ball game. We should pick a new location for the regional government centre and plan it. I want to see it properly planned, though I won't favor a Newmarket site."

"But if we're going to make the wrong move, let's do it cheaply and go back to Office Specialty. I haven't been working out of it, and hopefully I won't be in it," he said.

East Gwillimbury's Mayor Rolling here interjected, "If we put as much effort into building the building as we have into talking, we would have had it up already."

It was here that Plaxton, seconded by Lazenby, tried to get a separate vote on whether or not Newmarket was the right location.

But Chairman Wright intervened, ruling the motion was out of order.

Then Plaxton tried to get a broadening of the manor site motion to include all possible sites in Newmarket, "so the council would be tied to what might prove to be a very expensive proposition" and could go back even to the Office Specialty property if it remained available.

Turning down the Manor farm site were Burrows, Laushway, Lazenby, Plaxton, Pollock, Rowe, Williams and Rutherford in a vote of eight to six.

In favor were Ilingworth, Jongeneel, Lawrie, Mactaggart, Rollings and Twinn. Absent were Forhan and Roman.

With the manor farm site turned down, Burrows made a motion to purchase the Office Specialty building as an interim measure, with a study of permanent sites for the future to be undertaken.

Ilingworth declared he was still against the Office Specialty purchase because it was a bad location and would be a waste of money.

"Where are we going to get a quarter of a million dollars back for one-and-a-third acres of land? The building is old now. It's going to be at least five years older when we sell it. The land is only valued at \$180,000."

"We'll never get our money back out of that land or building," said the Aurora mayor.

At this point Markham's Jongeneel "got all shook up."

"This is ridiculous. I'm almost getting the feeling someone's in love with that old crap heap there."

"It's a white elephant. The company can't give it away."

"I certainly question the sincerity of members of council who bring that building back to the floor," said Jongeneel.

"Newmarket is going to buy it if the regional government doesn't," said Twinn.

Whitchurch-Stouffville's Laushway said it was apparent the police commission seemed very firm they wouldn't bring in any other sites.

"I don't know why. They should say, if they won't consider any others."

Rowe said he wanted to know why the council can't get comparative prices.

Jongeneel added to his remarks, pointing out the Office Specialty Building had been for sale for over a year.

"The price is too high. We don't even know what the renovations will cost."

"If we buy the Office Specialty property we may end up paying \$350,000. We should have a firm price, including renovations," he said.

Jongeneel moved an amendment to the Burrows motion, calling for a firm price on renovations. He had the support of Ilingworth, who agreed the council must have a firm price for the whole thing.

Burrows agreed to have his motion reworded to allow the engineering committee to require the firm price on renovations that Jongeneel wanted.

Ilingworth agreed, saying he would "vote in favor only to get this circus to come to an end."

The vote on the Burrows motion to ask the engineering committee to negotiate purchase of the Office Specialty Building was eleven to three in favor.

Against were Lazenby, Plaxton and Rowe. In favor were Burrows, Ilingworth, Jongeneel, Laushway, Lawrie, Mactaggart, Pollock, Rolling, Rutherford, Twinn and Williams.

Newmarket's Forhan and Markham's Roman were absent.

So now the police building issue is in the hands of the engineering committee, which includes council members Roman, Twinn, Rutherford, Rowe, Ilingworth and chairman Wright.

Markham's Jongeneel said he feels like Rowe that in picking a particular land site the council would be prejudicing the opportunity of getting a beautiful site and an economical building in a package deal.

"But we're only approving it in principle. We have to start somewhere."

"I want to show my co-operation and give the police commission an opportunity to do its job," said Jongeneel, indicating he would vote for the manor farm site.

Georgina's Burrows said he has become convinced the best thing was to have an interim building for the police for two or three years, maybe even four years. He said he would vote against the manor farm site.

Georgina's Pollock demanded to know if the police commission had received any building propositions from private enterprise.

Twinn admitted there had been some proposals, but said the police commission was too busy working on its budget to look at any building proposals.

Rowe said he knew of at least one from Stephenson Construction Company Limited for a site at 177 Yonge Street North in Richmond Hill.

Vaughan's Mayor Williams said he isn't entirely satisfied the Manor farm would be the right place for the police headquarters.

He said he would like to see a plan worked out for the whole manor farm property before it is chopped up in pieces.

"It's the wrong location, will continue to be wrong, and will become more evidently wrong as time goes by," said Plaxton.

"It's a new ball game. We should pick a new location for the regional government centre and plan it. I want to see it properly planned, though I won't favor a Newmarket site."

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MARCH 19, FRIDAY, 8 p.m. — Richmond Hill Naturalists meeting, Public Library Auditorium. Speakers: Mr. and Mrs. T. Boardman. Subject: "A Canadian Family's Two Years In East Africa". Everyone welcome. clw38

MARCH 19, FRIDAY — Bridge and Euchre. Our Lady Queen of the World. Bayview and Crosby. Admission \$1.50. 8:15 p.m. c2w37

MARCH 23, TUESDAY, 8 p.m. — Horticulturists present Arm Chair Travel Slides, Lions Hall, Richmond Hill. New members welcomed. clw38

MARCH 31, 1971 WEDNESDAY — Come and Go Luncheon and Bake Sale at Richmond Hill United Church. Luncheon sitings at 11:30 am, 12:15 pm and 1 pm. Tickets at \$1.25 are available from 884-2128. c2w37

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