

Leslie - Steeles Centre Rezoning

615 Thornhill High-Rise Units Go

By HAL BLAINE

Zoning changes to eliminate 615 high-rise apartment units now allowed in the southeast corner of Thornhill (German Mills-Leslie Street area) have been recommended to Markham Town Planning Committee and Council.

The high-rise apartments would be replaced by an enlargement of the present shopping centre zone. This will allow commercial development considered more desirable for the surrounding new low density residential area, more desirable for the town as a whole and more desirable from the developer's point of view, reports Markham Planning Director William Power.

Town council has scheduled a Thornhill public meeting November 12 to air the zoning change application of Wycliffe of Canada, 4949 Bathurst Street and Trizec Equities Limited, Yorkdale Shopping Centre, Metro. These two firms propose at Leslie Street and Steeles Avenue a closed mall shopping centre only slightly smaller than the new local \$20,000,000 Hillcrest Mall that is to have 560,000 square feet of retail floor space on 46.3 acres. Hillcrest Mall is now under construction at Carville Road and Yonge Street here in the Richvale area of Richmond Hill.

Trizec and Wycliffe developments to date include the Fairview Mall, Scarborough Town Centre and Yorkdale shopping centres.

of the changes. **KAY FAVORS PROPOSAL** Councillor Kay was questioned last week by this newspaper on the zoning change issue.

"I think that, basically, council feels the way I do, that a larger shopping centre seems to have merit. But we have to make sure there are no problems we can't handle and that we get the problems settled in advance," said Kay.

He says the only thing that has happened since the largely attended public hearing some time ago has been the October 2 meeting of council-in-planning-committee. Councillors heard the developers and considered the town planning staff technical report on the proposal. Also tabled was the new consultants' information report on traffic ramifications and a market analysis report.

DEVELOPERS ANXIOUS Kay says the developers are anxious to finalize their plans. Council is still working out details of requirements and agreements for consideration before the November 12 public hearing. He says the town has to be concerned about the impact the proposal would have on the immediate area. The traffic situation must be properly handled and the town staff and developers' traffic consultant indicate that the traffic problem can be worked out to advantage.

The local councillor says the developer proposes to widen Leslie Street from two lanes to four lanes from Steeles Avenue to Simonsion Boulevard. But he feels Leslie should be four lanes right up to John Street and five lanes from Steeles to Simonsion to allow left turn lanes.

TRAFFIC PROBLEMS Kay says there is the possibility of a big traffic tie-up but the town can avoid it by making sure the developer provides for streets that are wide enough.

"Leslie isn't even developed as an arterial road at present. The zoning change would mean they will be able to put in a major department store. This would mean a higher quality shopping centre of better service to the area. I favor this provided we can include safeguards to eliminate any (unfavorable) impact it's going to have on the immediate area," says Kay.

He says it's obvious the town will benefit from any increase in commercial assessment, but has to be sure the traffic will move smoothly all the time.

Kay notes there already is a traffic problem at Leslie and Steeles, without any shopping centre, but this is without much in the way of traffic design and improvement.

PROPOSE LIBRARY He says the developers propose a town library and office space on the third floor of the larger shopping centre, something which the town needs for the community if it can get a satisfactory long term lease. But he wonders about the desirability of having a library on the third floor away from the major public area.

"The library question is something else we will have to take a look at," he says. The proposal for a shopping centre of around 500,000 square feet of rentable retail floor space on a 30-acre site would make the Leslie and Steeles shopping facility one of the larger retail centres in the northern Metro vicinity.

COMPARABLE PLAZAS Nearby Towne and County Square is being enlarged from its former 312,000 square feet to 500,000 square feet on 36.8 acres while Yorkdale Shopping Centre has 1,246,000 square feet on 74.1 acres. Northtown Shopping Centre has 228,000 square feet on 14.4 acres, Agincourt Mall 244,000 square feet on 20.8 acres, Bayview Village Centre 210,000 square feet on 27.5 acres.

Markham planning staff favors the proposal to eliminate apartments and enlarge the shopping centre. The staff report concludes as follows:

"Considering all aspects of this proposal and its projected viability, we feel that an Official Plan amendment should be prepared and recommended to council."

Planning committee took no action on the staff recommendation, deciding to call a public hearing first.

tre, variously referred to as Bayview Summit plaza, Markham Marketplace and Wycliffe, included material from town and York Regional planners, plus that from consultants hired by the owners. It covers the following matters: traffic impact, marketability of the project, merits of the centre site increase from the aesthetic and social viewpoint, financial implications, site plan detail and conditions for approval.

Markham Planning Director Power reports that York Region Planning Commissioner Murray Pound and North York Planner John Curtis are prepared to look favorably on the application.

EFFECTS OF CHANGE The net effect on land use in the area under the application is listed as follows:

- Commercial-land area will increase from 17 acres to 30.8 acres;
- Townhouses — will increase from three acres to four acres, approximately;
- Mixed townhouses and apartments — will be reduced from 5.5 acres approximately to nothing;
- Apartments — will be reduced from 61 acres approximately to nothing;
- Shrivensham Court — will no longer be required;
- Dwelling units — will be reduced by 615;
- Population — will be reduced by 1,732;
- School pupils — will be reduced by 198 approximately;
- Institutional — 1 and a area of 1.6 acres is deleted.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS Planning Director Powers says the recommended favorable decision on the application should be subject to certain commitments relating to the site plan and to financial considerations.

He summarizes his findings as follows:

- The market analysis has been favorable.
- Traffic congestion has been discussed with regional engineering staff and can be accommodated without undue interference to residents in the neighborhood.
- The site plan calls for a two-storey structure which shouldn't be offensive to adjoining residents. And with landscaping and berming, particularly along Simonsion Boulevard and Leslie Street, (the centre proposed) should be visually more compatible with the neighborhood than a smaller plaza and high-rise apartments.
- The larger plaza will generate a better quality anchor tenant and as a result (will bring about) a better plaza from a visual aspect and from a merchandising aspect. It should also follow that security will be better and that problems of youth hang-out will be reduced.

The town's planners calculate the change in zoning will bring about a \$100,000 a year financial gain for local government, including a \$75,000 saving in education costs for the 607 apartments eliminated and over \$25,000 in increased commercial tax revenue.

DEFINITELY BETTER The planning report is very definite on the point that a larger shopping centre would be better for the immediate neighborhood.

"... there is no gainsaying the fact that the larger shopping centre would be of a higher quality and more amenable to being compatibly related to the immediate residential community, especially since the higher density, high-rise residential development would be eliminated," says the report.

"In this specific situation it will be easier to screen the enlarged centre on the 30 acre site (which eliminates the high-rise apartment buildings) than a smaller plaza backed by high-rise apartment buildings. Shopping centre buildings are relatively low profile and a combination of berming and landscaping along the sensitive boundaries can adequately reduce the visual intrusion of the centre. This is hardly possible with high-rise buildings."

MARKET ANALYSIS The summary and conclusions of the market analysis prepared for the proposed Markham Marketplace shopping centre by consultants, are in part as follows:

"The trade area includes the fast growing area of North York between Finch and Steeles Avenues, from the Don Valley in the west to Victoria Park Avenue in the east. It also includes the last remaining vacant residential land in Metro between Finch and Steeles, from Victoria Park Avenue eastward to North Road in Scarborough. This area should experience rapid population development over the next 15 years.

"Population in the entire trade area should approximate 91,400 in 1976, increasing to 163,900 by 1986. Within the primary zone of the trade area (which encompasses an area of three miles radius or less) the 1976 population is

projected at 56,400, increasing to 85,400 in 1986. The site enjoys good access routes from all parts of the trade area.

"Total department store type merchandise (DSTM) expenditure of trade area residents is estimated at \$69,100,000 in 1976, expanding to \$155,200,000 (in constant 1971 dollars) in 1986.

The public hearing for the proposed Thornhill commercial area rezoning from 17 acres to 30 acres for a shopping centre in the German Mills Neighborhood at Leslie Street and Steeles Avenue will be held at Bayview Fairways Public School, John Street and Bayview Fairways Drive at 8 pm November 12, according to the Markham Town Planning Office this week.

\$21 MILLION SALES

"Of this expenditure the DSTM stores in the Markham Market Place should gain a 31.5% share for DSTM sales of \$21,800,000 in 1976. In addition, it is estimated that 15% of the centre's total DSTM sales (\$3,800,000) will be derived from outside the trade area boundaries. Total DSTM sales in 1976 are projected at \$25,600,000. By 1986 the potential DSTM sales available to the centre would increase to \$54,000,000 (in constant 1971 dollars), but because of the limitation of the site size which wouldn't accommodate warranted expansion of the centre about 1983, the probable DSTM sales in 1986 are projected at only \$44,000,000," says the market analysis summary.

The traffic consultants sum up their findings on the effects of the proposed zoning change for a larger shopping centre as follows:

TRAFFIC CONCLUSIONS

"The proposed zoning change could increase total weekday traffic generated by the site from 14,300 vehicle trips to about 15,000, an increase of between five and 10%. The change in the number of vehicle trips generated during certain periods of the day may be the most noticeable result of the rezoning. Development based on the proposed zoning would reduce travel to and from the site during the average weekday morning by about 30%, but would increase it on the average weekday evening by between 20 and 30%.

"A preliminary estimate of trip generation indicates that about 25% of all trips would travel to and from the site via Leslie Street under either zoning alternative. However, future decisions concerning road improvements and the selection of site access configuration could change the arrival rate via Leslie Street quite significantly."

Dr. Peter King

Name Toronto Man Regional Coroner

Solicitor General John Yaremko has announced the appointment of Dr. Peter King of Toronto as Ontario's first regional coroner to supervise York and Peel Counties.

"We see the appointment of Dr. King as an initial move to relieve the increasingly heavy load on the chief coroner's office in Toronto by providing local coroners with more authority to handle a greater number of problems directly," Mr. Yaremko said.

He said that York and Peel accounted for almost 30 percent of all cases investigated by the coroner's office.

In his new post, Dr. King will provide advisory and coordinating services to local coroners in such matters as investigations and inquests, as well as questions pertaining to the need for holding them.

He will also be available to conduct inquests when conflicts of interest occur, assist in investigations and obtain expert witnesses.

Dr. King has been practising medicine since 1949 and has been a provincial coroner since 1964.

He is a member of the Ontario Medical Association, Canadian Medical Association, Toronto East Medical Association and the Coroners' Association of Ontario.

NEWMARKET — Although provincial approval has not yet been received town council has decided to release building permits for the Valley of the Cedars Subdivision. A condition of the subdivision agreement is that the builder pay a \$300,000 levy to build a new community centre. This would be east of Main Street on the Holland River and would include an addition to the Main Street municipal offices, a park with a lighted ball diamond and up to a dozen tennis courts. Mayor Bob Forhan predicts that it could be ready by next October.



(Photos by Stuart's Studio)

Christmas In The Air At Richmond Hill United

A sale of handcrafted Christmas Decorations will be but a small part of the overall program for Richmond Hill United's Christmas Shopping Bazaar November 8, beginning at 11 am. There will be a "Come and Go" luncheon beginning at 11 am, sewing, white elephants, home baking and all that goes to make a good bazaar. Busy assembling varied and imaginative decorations are (left to right) Mrs. Ruby Uren, Mrs. Jany Miller, Mrs. Edith Boynton, Mrs. Jean Sherman and Mrs. Phyllis Sringer.



COUNCILLOR KAY Represents Area

PROBLEM OF CHANGE

Local South Thornhill Ward 1 Markham Councillor Gary Kay, just moved into a new home at 86 Aberfeldy Crescent in the vicinity of the proposed shopping centre, says there is some problem over the question of changing the zoning and development plans after a large number of people have purchased new homes there.

These people just moved in or just moving in are naturally disturbed by being presented with a change in the neighborhood development plans so soon, says Kay, and there are also people who feel apartments are preferable to a larger shopping centre.

But the town isn't doing anything at least until the whole matter is fully aired at the November 12 public hearing and is having the proposal very thoroughly studied. A large number of new residents turned out some time ago at the council meeting where the new proposal was first received. As a result of public requests made at that time, the town has required the developers to submit a detailed traffic study and other information on the effects

of the change.

COMING EVENTS
DUPLICATE BRIDGE — 3 sessions, Mondays and Fridays 8 p.m., Wednesdays 1 p.m. Oak Ridges Plaza, Marie Cole, 773-4280. tcl13

HUNTER'S Safety Course given in Richmond Hill. Call 884-6544. clw18

NOVEMBER 4, SUNDAY — 10-6 Antique show and sale, Lions' Hall, 106 Centre Street East, Richmond Hill. Furniture, china, glass, silver, jewellery, brass, pictures. Bargains galore. Sale held first Sunday every month. Donations to Leukemia Fund. clw18

NOVEMBER 9, FRIDAY — 6:30 to 9 p.m., St. Matthew's United Church. Bazaar, Crosby Avenue, Richmond Hill. clw18

NOVEMBER 10, SATURDAY — Happy Holiday Bazaar and Bake Sale at Maple United Church, 2 p.m. clw18

NOVEMBER 10, SATURDAY, 12:30 pm — Auction Sale of Household Effects: Glassware, appliances, etc., including G.E. stove, refrigerator, 30 cu. ft. chest freezer, automatic washer, dryer, Electrolux stereo T.V., executive office desk, bedroom suite, crystal, stemware and other articles too numerous to mention. The property of W. J. Wilson, 39 Alice Cres., Scarborough, located one block east of Pharmacy Ave. and one block north of Elmlesmere. Time: 12:30 pm. No reserve. Auctioneers: Walker-Liptay Ltd., 68 Sherwood Forest Drive, Markham. 294-4970. clw18

Name Local Hospital's New Wing After Retiring Dr. James Langstaff

The 277-bed addition to York Central Hospital now nearing completion will be known as the Langstaff Wing, in recognition of the contribution of that family to this community over a period of three generations.

The announcement was made by Board Chairman Mrs. Grace Jackson Tuesday evening of last week at a dinner tendered by the Board of Trustees in honor of Dr. and Mrs. James Langstaff and former trustees and patrons of York Central Hospital. Dr. Langstaff, who has recently retired from private practice, was York Central's first Chief of Staff and a driving force behind the movement to establish a community hospital in Richmond Hill.

A reception preceded the dinner in the conference room where guests had an opportunity to renew acquaintances, view colored slides of the new wing in various stages of construction, preview with the help of architects' drawings its interior plan and decoration, and enjoy an exhibit of old photos and clippings recording highlights in the lives

Primary Class Sizes Decrease

The number of students per class in the primary grades shows a slight reduction this year, it was reported at a meeting of York County Board of Education last week.

In kindergarten, for example, where there were now 160 classes compared to 109 last February, the class size varied from 15 to 32, compared with 17 to 39 in February.

In grade 1, there are 109 classes—down one—and the median class size is 26 instead of 27. Classes range from 17 to 32 students, compared with 18 to 41 before. The range of 90 percent of the classes is 20 to 31 students, compared with 20 to 32 in February.

Grade 2 — 101 classes, compared with 114; median class size is 28 instead of 29; range — 16 to 36, compared with 17 to 35.

Grade 3 — 110-109; median — 29-30; range — 17 to 36, compared with 21 to 37.

Grade 4 — 112-113; median — same at 31; range — 21 to 38 compared with 20 to 41.

Grade 5 — 116-111; median — down one to 31; range — 21 to 37 compared with 18 to 40.

of "Dr. Jim and Barbara". The hospital cafeteria had been transformed for the occasion into an attractive dining room complete with a magnificent floral arrangement created by Mrs. Flavia Redelmeier, a former president of the hospital auxiliary. Dinner was served by the cafeteria staff, assisted by members of the junior auxiliary.

Following dinner, Mrs. Jackson welcomed the guests and introduced a succession of speakers who, with fond reminiscences and good humour, paid tribute to the honored guests, to those now deceased who had contributed so much to the hospital's beginnings, to Past Administrator Gary Chastfield and his successor James Hepburn, and altogether told the story of York Central and its hopes for the future.

Speakers included Graham Walter, a trustee and former board chairman; John Griffin, chairman of the hospital's building committee and former board chairman, Neville Evelyn, chairman of the hospital's finance committee, Samuel Cook, vice-chairman of the board of trustees, Mrs. Peggy Temple, president of the hospital auxiliary; Dr. Victor Zuck, Chief of Staff at York Central and Stuart Parker, a trustee and former board chairman.

In his remarks accepting the honor on behalf of the Langstaff family, Dr. James Langstaff recalled an earlier hospital in Richmond Hill operated by his father, Dr. Rolph Langstaff, in his home prior to World War I. He had with him several interesting pieces of china which had been used in that hospital years ago.

Stuart Parker spoke for everyone present when he

expressed the hope that despite the ever-increasing growth which the hospital is experiencing, it will be possible to maintain the same warm, personal atmosphere of "caring" for which it has become so well known since its inception.

Approve Salaries For Night Teachers

York County Board of Education last week approved a salary schedule for night school teachers, which will give them \$11 for one hour, \$22 for two and \$30 for three. Night school principals with an enrolment of 1,000 will receive a salary of \$1,200. For those with an enrolment between 300-399, the salary will be \$900, while under 300 it will be \$800, plus \$10 a night for each night of supervision.

Vice-principals in a school of 1,000 and up will receive \$850.

A total of 3,682 people registered for night classes at 10 secondary schools in the county this year.

Expenditures last year totalled \$111,983, while revenues were \$125,962. Tuition fees provided \$56,813, while a legislative grant provided \$69,149.

NEWMARKET — South Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority is dredging the duck pond adjacent to the senior citizens' apartment and has to drain Fairy Lake to do the work. After the dredging is completed, water level in the lake will be brought back to normal.

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J. B. JEFFERY
Appointment

The board of directors of
Classic Communications Limited
is pleased to announce the
appointment of J. B. Jeffery
as general manager. A resident
of Unionville, Mr. Jeffery will
be responsible for all phases of
the company's Cable TV service
to its 16,000 subscribers in the
Markham-Vaughan-Richmond
Hill-Stouffville area.