

# Arena price tag still hanging

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"It's a design that doesn't have a lot of bells and whistles," Sweet said. "It's the basics that you'll need in a facility."

He said there still isn't a price tag attached because certain details have to be worked out by the architects.

The steering committee has declined a handful of designs in the past year because they were considered too pricey.

"They know clearly what our price range is and what we can afford," he said. "We know what they gave us before – the \$16 million to \$19 million plans – we can't afford."

Sweet said the design includes an option to twin the facility in two phases, depending on costs and the amount of money raised for the project by the community.

The second rink would include grandstand seating for about 150 people above a set of dressing rooms.

"With the condition of (Essex Memorial Arena), we know we're going to

need one facility for sure," he said.

According to a report from Dillon Consulting Ltd., the existing arena will only be structurally sound until 2010.

The firm advised the town after the arena was closed for two weeks near the end of 2005 for structural repairs.

President of the Essex Minor Hockey Association Board Michele Bradt said building a single pad wouldn't solve the scheduling problems that have forced the board to rent ice from an arena in Leamington to accommodate the EMHA's 500 players.

Bradt said there has been an ongoing concern among parents and coaches about overbooked scheduling at the arena.

"Ice time is our number one complaint," she said. "We would have to have two rinks to alleviate our problem."

The Jan. 15 meeting will take place at 4:30 p.m. at town hall. Members of the arena steering committee are welcoming the public to attend.

## Arena timeline

FROM FREE PRESS FILES

2005

**February:** The Kinsmen Club of Essex agrees to head fundraising for the Essex Arena Expansion and Revitalization Committee. They pledge \$100,000 to the project. The fundraising totals reach \$400,000 during a reception held by the Kinsmen.

**June:** During a public meeting attended by members of town council and several ratepayers, DMA Consulting of Mississauga present a report outlining a need for a twin pad ice arena in Essex. The Kinsmen Club of Essex agrees to put \$750,000 up front before council will consider committing the town to backing a new facility.

**August:** Council approves stage two of its feasibility study. Wendy Donovan of DMA Consulting tells council that a twin-pad arena is feasible given the current and projected future use.

**November:** After structural repairs are undertaken at Essex Memorial Arena, council considers a report

by DMA Planning and Engineering about the possibility of building a new arena with an attached second ice pad at the site of the existing arena.

The arena is closed because of safety concerns. The announcement causes several hockey games to be rescheduled. The arena remains closed for two weeks.

**December:** Essex Town Council decides to look at hiring a project manager to oversee the proposed renovation and expansion of the arena.

Dillon Consulting Ltd. of Windsor estimates the cost of repairing cracks in the outer walls of Essex Memorial Arena to be around \$100,000. Tony Gardonio, a former Essex 73's player, offers the services of his company, Facca Inc., and lists the cost of repairs at around \$30,000.

2006

**February:** MHPM Project Managers Inc. are hired and recommend that the town build a completely new structure without incorporating part of the existing arena.



Wooden planks were installed outside Essex Memorial Arena in November 2005 to secure walls that were cracking. The problem was listed in a report conducted by a Windsor engineering company in April 2005.

**March:** Essex Town Council passes a motion to ask the arena project manager to prepare schematic designs of a new twin-pad arena.

**September:** Architects submit two designs of an arena facility to the town's steering committee.

A series of open houses scheduled in Essex and Harrow to review design plans are cancelled. Parks and Recreation Director Doug Sweet says the arena steering committee wasn't satisfied with the designs

submitted by architects Rounthwaite, Dick and Hadley Inc. The estimated costs of the two facilities were \$16.9 million and \$15.7 million.

The arena steering committee researches the St. Thomas Community Centre Complex as a potential model for a local facility.

The Kinsmen Club of Essex holds a party for supporters of the arena project where they announce that approximately \$600,000 has been raised in both cash and pledges.

## Essex MP Jeff Watson "In Your Area Days"



*I am looking forward to meeting you. If you cannot attend the Meet & Greet in your area, please feel free to attend another in a neighbouring community.*

### MP Meet & Greets

6 pm to 9 pm on the following days and locations:

**Kingsville – January 8th**

Kingsville Luxury Retirement Centre  
240 Main Street

**Harrow – January 10th**

Harrowood Seniors Community Centre  
1 Pollard Drive

**LaSalle – January 15th**

Knights of Columbus Hall  
8965 Malden Road, River Canard

**Lakeshore - January 17th**

Chartwell Oak Park Lakeshore  
1700 County Road 22, Belle River

For further information:

Call 519.776.4700

www.jeffwatsonmp.ca



Town of/Ville de Lakeshore  
419 Notre Dame Street  
Belle River, ON NOR 1A0  
519.728.2700 or 1.877.249.3367  
www.lakeshore.ca

### NOTICE OF A PUBLIC MEETING

**January 30, 2007 from 6:30 – 9:00 pm**

**St. Simon St. Jude Parish Hall, 267 Meunier, Belle River, ON**

The Town of Lakeshore is preparing a Community Services Master Plan with the support of an external consulting team.

This Master Plan includes the following topics:

- Parks and Recreation Master Plan;
- Multi-Use Facility Master Plan;
- Heritage, Arts and Culture Master Plan;
- Tourism Development Master Plan; and
- Waterfront Development Strategy.

In order to identify community interests with respect to these plans, a **Public Meeting** is being held at the date, time and place described above. The purpose of the meeting is for members of the public to share views on leisure and recreation issues important to Lakeshore.

The meeting format will include an overview of the Master Plan, a series of worktables where the public will be invited to discuss questions and a reporting back to the larger group. The questions are related to the strengths, challenges and opportunities for leisure, recreation, parks, culture, arts and heritage in the Town of Lakeshore.

Public input will be valuable for ideas, priorities and the future direction of services in Lakeshore. Public participation is important and we look forward to public attendance and participation.

If there are any questions before the meeting, please contact: Terri-Ann Hurst, Strategic Services Analyst, Town of Lakeshore at (519) 728-2700 ext. 271 or William Pol, Planning Manager, IBI Group at (519) 472-7328.