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TO BE HELD**
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Wednesday, April 25, 2007

School merger plans approved

Sun Parlor, Maplewood to merge in 2008

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

Principals of Sun Parlor Junior School and Maplewood Public School applauded a decision to approve construction plans for a merger of the two facilities during a Greater Essex County District School Board meeting last week.

The replacement school is estimated to cost about \$12 million and will be open for classes in Sept. 2008.

For Sun Parlor principal Linda Beckan and Maplewood principal Lynn McLaughlin, the board's announcement to go ahead with the construction came as a relief.

Initially, plans were temporarily stalled after the board approved the merger in Feb. 2005, and the official announcement that a new facility would be constructed was held off until last June.

"It's finally happened," McLaughlin said. "It's a reality."

The total area of the new facility will be approximately 74,000 square feet, built on the north end of the Maplewood property. About 590 students will be enrolled from day care to Grade 8.

The merger means that siblings who were formerly split up between the two schools will now be brought together under one roof, McLaughlin said.

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Photos: Andy Comber

NEXT STEP – Essex Mayor Ron McDermott, left, speaks during a special council meeting held April 20 at the Essex Civic Centre to review options and pricing for a new arena facility. "I've been told – get 'er done," said McDermott, pictured here with Town Clerk Jerry Marion.



Coun. Morley Bowman, centre, makes a motion to endorse in principle one of the three options for a new twin-pad arena presented to council last Friday. Coun. Paul Innes, right, successfully moved to table that motion until an engineering firm can report on the structural stability of the existing arena. Innes' motion was supported by Coun. Peter Timmins, left, Coun. Ron Rogers and Mayor Ron McDermott.

Final arena decision delayed

BY DANIEL SCHWAB

Minor hockey players and their parents will be forced to wait until next week for a final arena decision after town council voted Friday to have another look at the structural condition of Essex Memorial Arena before choosing one of three options for a new facility.

Dozens of hockey moms and dads, many sporting EMHA jerseys, packed into the Essex Civic Centre to catch a glimpse of what their kids would be skating in over the coming years.

But many left grumbling after council decided to delay a final decision and hire an engineer to determine the viability of the 53-year-old arena and whether or not two new facilities will be needed at this time.

After spearheading an independent review of Memorial Arena, Ward 3 Coun. Paul Innes offered council a proposal to upgrade the structure and add a second rink for about \$8.75 million.

Architect L.P. Meyer Associates and contractor Papatello and Sons Ltd. performed a free inspection of the arena and created a design to revamp and twin the arena, which included a new entrance and roof. Plans for the new rink included a proshop, administrative offices, 10 dressing rooms and a 27,000-square-foot community room.

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