

Town considers low-cost housing

STOUFFVILLE — Planning Board, Tuesday night, received two proposals for low-cost housing in Whitchurch.

The first scheme, brought in by Mrs. George Lankin, was for a 128-acre development, west of Musselman's Lake. This would include 120 low-cost houses, 26 two-acre estate-type parcels, five acres of multiple housing and a 10-acre commercial site.

There is another 100-acre parcel south of the proposed development, known as the Montgomery property, which is under option to the South Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority.

The second proposal was introduced by developer Clayton Clouter and takes in the 137-acre farm on the Bethesda Road owned by Gino Testa.

That one would include 106 lots, one-third of which would be low-cost housing. According to Mr. Clouter the moderate priced housing would sell for \$35,900, subject to the cost of labor and materials at the time of construction.

Mr. Testa emphasized this price could not be guaranteed if construction is not completed for four or five years.

Mr. Clouter said sale of the low-priced houses would be restricted to young married couples living in the municipality, houses would not be sold to people with high incomes and there would be a five-year restriction on resale of the property, "to eliminate speculation." The minimum lot size will be three-quarters of an acre and some will be two acres.

The Musselman's Lake development would be developed by the owners and other lots would be available for people wishing to build their own houses.

Commented Mayor Gordon Ratcliff on the Lankin proposal, "these are very preliminary plans and the number of lots seems high but it seems to meet the requirements."

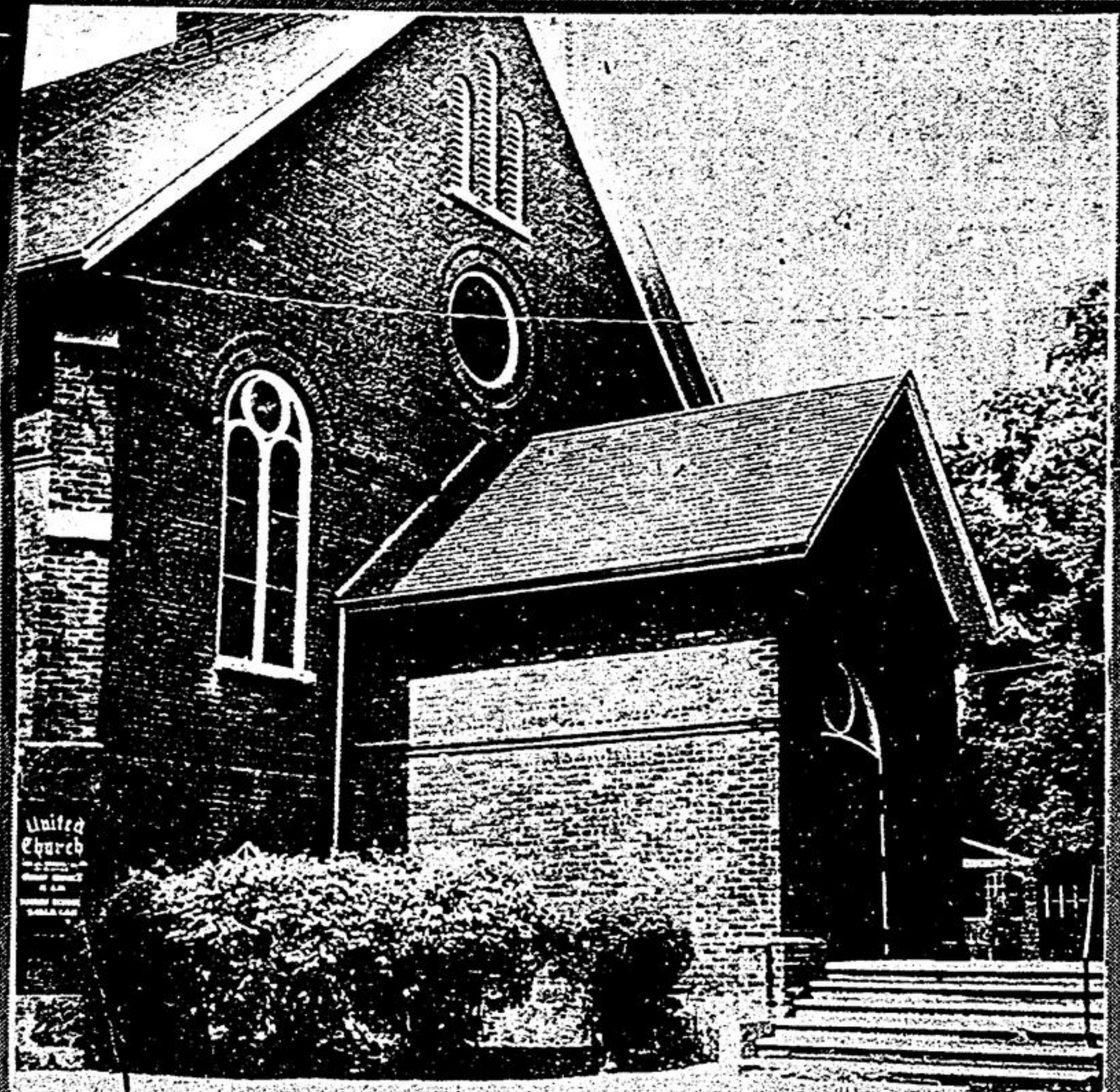
Councillor Jim Wong said he didn't object to the proposal as such but said, "I'm concerned about the location, immediately adjacent to the Ballantrae hamlet area. I want council to make some kind of long term statement on the future of the area before making a decision of any kind."

Councillor Cathy Joice

objected to the proposal. "The low-cost housing lots overshadow the estate type. This is unacceptable. You'll have to come up with a better balance," she told Mrs. Lankin.

Planning Board voted to arrange a meeting between the property owners, council members and the Regional Area Services Branch.

Councillor Eldred King voiced objections to the Clouter-Testa proposal. "I don't see development of that density in that area," Councillor King said he thought the area was too remote for young couples, "who would want to go to the store for milk at least every two days." He said he would be prepared to accept the proposal if there were more five to ten acre estate lots included.



Stouffville United Church will have a new front on the present. Renovations would eliminate the steep look if plans go through to put a new front on the steps that prevent a problem for older members structure. This picture shows how it looks at of the congregation. — Ted Wilcox

New front for church

STOUFFVILLE — The Stouffville United Church is making plans to build a new front onto the church. They applied to the town for a minor variance for that reason.

Rev. J.L. Carder said that the architect just has temporary sketches of the plans now, but they hope to have complete plans by September.

"We're trying to overcome the steep eight steps and 14 steps just inside the door," he said. He added that quite a number of the older members have been unable to come to church because of the steps.

The new front would include a small vestibule that would face south.

Macedonian picnic ground

Neighbors complain

GOODWOOD — A long-festering problem involving an ethnic picnic ground near Goodwood could bring municipal regulations to the operation of privately owned parks.

Councillor Eleanor Todd

reported to Uxbridge Council last week that neighbors of the Macedonian picnic ground on the north side of Highway 1A, west of the 6th Conc., have been complaining about noise from music playing there.

The issue is only the latest in

a running battle between neighbors of the private park and its owners. In 1973 complaints were forwarded to the health authorities over toilet facilities.

"The neighbors' main complaint now is noise," she said.

The councillor suggested that regulations might be desirable because of persistent complaints from nearby residents.

She detailed three main areas of complaint — lack of proper washroom facilities; cooking fires not always extinguished; and a blaring public address system.

She added that the owners charge admission and that it may not be just a private picnic area, but a public park.

Councillor Todd said the police were called because of the excessive noise, but were not aware of the township's newly passed anti-noise bylaw and nothing was done.

"I informed the officer here (Uxbridge detachment) but it has not filtered down to headquarters yet," she said.

A joint meeting of the Planning and Development and Public Protection and Parks committees will consider the matter.

Bikes threaten regional forest

VIVIAN — Cut fences and torn up trails are main reasons why trail bikes are causing officials of the York Regional Forest more than a few problems this summer.

"A minority have been breaking in and cutting fences," management forester John Griffiths told The Tribune Tuesday.

Under the rules of the forest, motor vehicles are not allowed. The public may enter on horseback or on foot.

Mr. Griffiths said that trail bikes and motorcycles are dangerous to walkers, are noisy, and cause environmental damage. "The environmental reason is that paths have been cut up badly causing erosion

and stripping off cover that's been there for 50 years," he said.

Mr. Griffiths said they didn't want the forest to turn into a race course.

A standard information sign now stands at all public entrances, informing people of the forest rules. A four-foot gap with a wooden bar across provides easy access for pedestrians, but not for bikers.

"It is a problem. We're having to continually patrol our properties," said Mr. Griffiths. At present, they talk with offenders, hoping they will cooperate, he said.

The only legislation that could be used on offenders, he said, "is the general legislation regarding trespassing," he said.

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Downtown off-street parking

Committee seeks land

STOUFFVILLE — Council's Committee on Traffic and Parking is still searching for land for downtown off-street parking, but with no concrete results.

"To date we have not been able to acquire property that will lend itself to off-street parking," said committee chairman Eldred King. "Nothing is accomplished on getting options on properties with actual figures that we can get back to the downtown businessmen with."

Commented Mayor Gordon Ratcliff, "We certainly have not given up on plans for off-street parking. We are looking into purchasing the back half of the Bank of Commerce property (formerly the Ratcliff block) and we are considering other sites."

The mayor explained the owners of several properties have been contacted but have not come back with prices yet.

The new post office being erected on Main St. will provide customer parking to the rear of the building.

The Traffic and Parking Committee came up with the idea of assessing the downtown merchants for the cost of acquiring this land. Business

establishments between Lloyd Ave. on the west and Park Dr. on the east would be assessed, if 60 per cent of the businessmen agree to the scheme.

According to figures released at a public meeting in February the project could be accomplished through an expenditure of \$170 per year on a \$20,000 assessment, over 20 years.

At that meeting Councillor King explained a yearly tax of 8.5 mills on a commercial assessment of \$1,200,000 would raise \$100,000, which would be enough money to provide a minimum of 57 parking spaces.

Victor Orchard, a plaza merchant, attending the meeting commented, "I play more than your yearly estimate every month."

"The way I read it right now most of them would not vote to pay for off-street parking," said Councillor King. "I could be all wrong," he added.

Mr. King said the initial reaction at the public meeting had been favorable to the plan but since that time he had received several calls from downtown businessmen opposing the scheme.

"If the property owners don't want it and council still

feels it's necessary, then parking meters would have to be installed," he concluded. "It's

unfair to ask tenants in the west end plaza to subsidize downtown parking."

Merchants split over tax scheme

By JOHN MONTGOMERY
Tribune Reporter

STOUFFVILLE — A scheme to have downtown merchants foot the bill for off-street parking has received a cool reception from the businessmen involved, a Tribune survey has revealed.

Answers varied from that of Ken Wagg, Wagg's Jewelry and China, who said, "I'm 100 per cent for it," to that of Gennie Cuthbertson, The Appliance Shop, who commented, "it's not fair."

Said Mr. Wagg, "The salvation of the whole downtown area is based on parking and redevelopment." He said he could understand people who rent their business property opposing the idea. "They know their rent will go up and they may not intend to stay. They don't have an investment in the area and this is a long term thing."

"The people in the village should be assessed because it will improve the downtown area and make it grow," said Mrs. Cuthbertson, who objected to paying for off-street parking as she has parking spaces behind the store for her customers.

"They should get the business people working in the stores off the street," she added and her husband Dave commented: "They should put a free parking lot in and make them pay for Main Street parking." He felt this would discourage people from parking there all day and would then leave space for shoppers.

Harold Thurston, proprietor of Ted's Mens Wear, hasn't come to a decision yet. "The idea is alright depending on what's involved cost wise. We're absolutely in the dark as to the cost, location and amount of parking. It's difficult to make a decision until you have the facts."

He said he would decide when council came back with "some concrete proposals."

Earl Lehman, owner of Lehman's Shoes was of the opinion the businessmen should play a percentage of the cost and the rest should be picked up by the town.

"I don't think it should totally be assessed to business properties because there are others besides business people who will benefit from it. It's agreed parking is certainly needed and if there is no other way the business people will have to stand behind it."

"Downtown Stouffville will die if they don't get more parking," said Mrs. Cuthbertson.

Council engages firm to test ground water

STOUFFVILLE — Whitchurch-Stouffville Council has engaged a Barrie firm, International Water Supply, to complete a hydrologists survey for the environmental hearing on the York Sanitation land fill site.

During a Tribune interview Mayor Gordon Ratcliff revealed the firm had been engaged for an estimated cost up to \$600 and

the study is expected to be completed by Aug. 10.

The firm will chart the underground water flow to estimate the effect of the Highway 48 dump site on local wells as well as the town water supply.

The mayor said the study would indicate the present and future pollution hazards of the dump.

Disconnections do tell a story

By TED WILCOX
Tribune Reporter

STOUFFVILLE — It's plain that the population of Stouffville and surrounding communities is growing. The former village has increased by seven to eight per cent each year — from 2300 in 1957 to 5200 in 1973.

Another angle of the change in the area is shown in Bell Canada records. The percentage of telephone disconnections each year, or of people changing their address, has grown from 12 percent in 1963 to 20 percent in 1973.

The Markham disconnections have grown from about 13-18 per cent over the same period.

The significance of statistics such as those is examined in the 1972 book "A Nation of Strangers" by Vance Packard. He claims his research shows that a more "mobile" town, or one in which people move more often, tends to exhibit certain bad tendencies among the residents.

These included a decline in companionship, satisfying group activities, mutual trust, and psychological security. "Rootlessness," he wrote, "encourages a shallowness in personal relationships and a relative indifference to community problems."

However, Stouffville is still well below the national average for telephone disconnections, which according to Mr. Packard stands at 25 per cent. Also, people moving from government expropriated properties may account for many of the disconnections.

An organization that generally senses a shift in population is Welcome Wagon Ltd. Pat Beaton, who is local representative, reports that she has noticed a great increase in her business from last year. "I know my calls compared with the girl who did it previously are way up," she said.

While Stouffville Welcome Wagon handled 65 calls in 1973, over the same period in 1974 they have made 124.

Several recent newcomers to Stouffville represent the growing tendency of people to move rather frequently. Four of seven recent arrivals that we contacted had moved twice or more in the past 10 years.

All of this seems to show that Stouffville is growing and people are moving more often. While the town is still more "stable" than the nation as a whole, it could very well take on a more urban, "mobile" character in future years — if the present trends continue.



This lonely sentinel seems to be guarding the entrance to the Thicketwood subdivision presently under construction south of the arena. Work is progressing on what will be a two-stage development. The street that goes in will be considerably higher than the present grade level. The access to Main St. opposite Stouffer St. was begun recently. — Ted Wilcox

Library to close for big move

STOUFFVILLE — The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library will be closed Aug. 20 to Sept. 17 in order to move to a new location. The library will be moving to 45 Main St. West, formerly Paul's store.

Until Aug. 17, patrons may borrow an unlimited number of books on an extended loan until Sept. 17. "Don't get caught short, stock up now on your favorite reading," Librarian, Lynne Robbins said.

For those patrons wishing to return books during the closing, an outside book return slot will be located on the Mill St. side wall of the new library.

"No fines will be charged on books returned during this time in order to encourage the return of books overdue," according to Mrs. Robbins.

Volunteers who are interested in helping with the move may contact the library, 640-2395. Help will be needed August 21-23 to move books, and other volunteers will be needed for creative painting, odd jobs and carpentry.