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8515 McCowan Road, Markham, Ontario
(Northeast corner of Highway 7 & McCowan Rd.)



Surveyor Fred Watt checks the alignment while Dave Rendimonti looks on during Main St. construction in Unionville. Merchants seem resigned

to a loss of business during the construction period.

— Sjoerd Witteveen

shop
Economist & Sun
The Tribune
before
you
shop
the
stores

Traffic disruption not too bad: merchants

Dust, noise and traffic jams. Those are the three aggravations on Unionville's Main Street while the route undergoes reconstruction and beautification.

But despite the disruption, most merchants are content with the situation and anxious to see the final results.

The project involves replacing water mains, burying hydro and telephone lines, repaving the road, laying interlocking stones between the sidewalk and the street, and improving the streetscape with lamp posts, benches, hanging plants, trees and shrubs.

Only one store representative refused to speak to the Weekender, fearing that negative comments might affect the efficiency of the construction workers.

Other store operators had nothing but praise for the workers and perseverance for the inconvenience.

Joan Belne, owner of the Kettle Creek Canvas Co. said, "The construction workers are super. They're fast and polite."

"And the customers are coming in talking, they're excited about what's going to be here," she continued.

Laurie Beckwith, assistant manager of The Old Firehall Sports said business hasn't suffered too much during the construction.

"It has (suffered), but not as badly as we expected. There's still a steady pace coming in."

Merchants have tried to encourage that steady pace by organizing a sidewalk sale which began Thursday and continues until tomorrow, Sunday, July 21.

The Stitching Niche is on the other side of the street where the sidewalks have already been laid. Salesperson Isobel Moore doesn't see the construction being much of a problem. If anything, it has helped the customers discover parking off the Main St.

"People don't realize there's as much parking as there is. I hope when everything is finished, the parking will be more clearly marked."

And for the workers she had nothing but good to say. "They've done everything they can to make it easy for us."

The store manager at Down to Earth agreed, although she said the work has caused somewhat of a slow down in business.

Rita Gandha said, "There has been a decline although I can't say it's extreme. The customers find it kind of disappointing to come for an afternoon of shopping and find this."

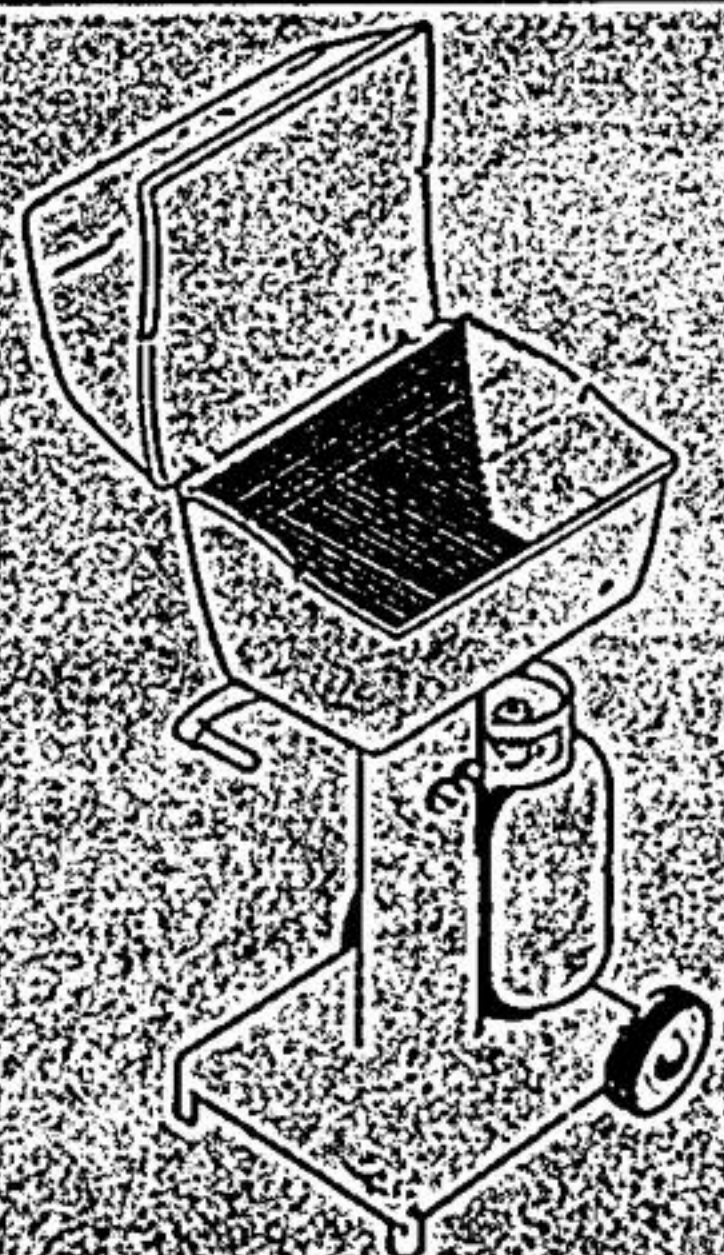
But she was quick to add, "Once it's done it's going to be beautiful."

Site foreman Giovanni Ostella of Dagmar Construction Co. expects the project to last another three or four weeks.

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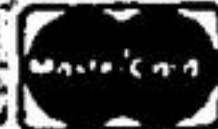
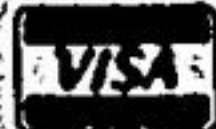
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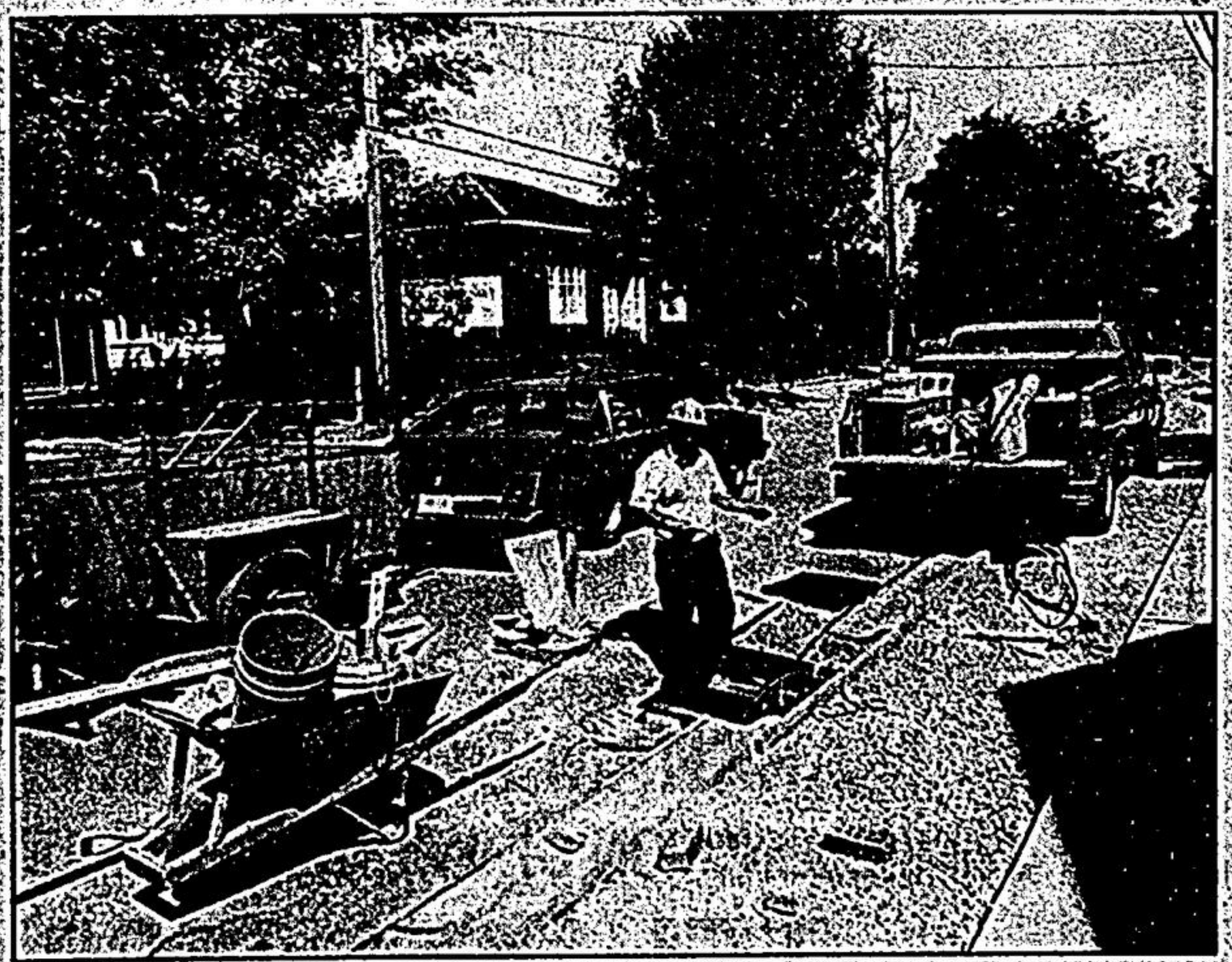
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Cars have to squeeze through on a single lane during construction on Unionville's Main St. The work should continue for

about another month.

— Sjoerd Witteveen