

MAYOR'S RACE '85

Carole Bell campaigns on a 'trust me' theme

By PAULA CROWELL
Staff Reporter

Carole Bell is out to make an honest mayor of herself.

She was appointed to the office in February 1984, when she succeeded Tony Roman who had left to become Regional Chairman. Prior to that, Mrs. Bell had been a regional and ward councillor in the Town of Markham.

Her election campaign has been built on the foundation that Carole Bell is a woman you can trust. She makes known her opinion on issues, and prides herself that she doesn't sit on the fence.

"People believe what I say, they know I'm never going to put them on, rip them off, or be two-faced in my approach to them."

She describes a scenario of a cigar-smoking politician in a pinstripe suit passing money under her desk and laughs at the image.

Mrs. Bell hasn't adopted the menswear styles common to women in positions of power, choosing instead to wear feminine clothing.

Although she favors a feminine touch in her clothing, she's prepared to take a tough stand on the one issue which exists in the mayoralty race.

Markham's growth while envied by other municipalities is not without problems. Housing developments are much easier to deliver than schools and roads, so both newcomers and long-time residents face problems of overcrowded classrooms and traffic congestion.

Freeze development

Mrs. Bell insists that if schools are not forthcoming in several communities, she will put a freeze on housing development.

She sees a situation in which the Town and developers would put pressure on the province to provide funding for schools.

Funding for Aldergrove Public School was only gained by putting extreme pressure on the provincial Ministry of Education, she said. It had been turned down, but lobbying by the Town and the York Region Board of Education was successful in changing the government's decision.

The other issues raised by her opponent are already being looked at, she said, citing road improvements as one area where the Town is attempting to make progress.

Other projects include an expansion of the Thornhill Community Centre library,

a swimming pool and library for Milliken and an arena in northeast Markham. Mrs. Bell describes these as "absolutely mandatory."

Preserve agriculture

As for the farmers of Markham, Mrs. Bell said they won't be wiped out by large-scale developments.

"The feeling I get (from preliminary reports of the Official Plan review) is that we should not be expanding the urban envelope to any great degree for a number of years. There should be an attempt to keep 50 per cent of land for agriculture," she explained.

She hopes any development north of 16th Ave. will compliment what is already there — estate homes on large lots.

One development which will be worked on intensely in the coming term is a new municipal building. Mrs. Bell expects it to be ready by 1988.

Another of her ongoing priorities is making sure she's available to people who have complaints. Mrs. Bell stresses the importance of dealing with these people sensitively.

"Anyone who picks up the phone and calls the mayor (to complain) has a serious problem," she said explaining that if it were less serious, it would have been dealt with at a lower level.

Political family

This ties in with her desire to make herself available to constituents.

"It's so important that you are available and will come and listen to people. You must also hear their complaints and react to try to get things going better."

That's why Mrs. Bell became involved in municipal politics in 1972. As a newcomer to Unionville, she had concerns about her neighborhood which didn't seem to bother anyone in power.

"We had no parks, no tennis courts, no pool, no decent ball diamond and nobody seemed to care about the ordinary people."

While she had no political experience, she was brought up in an atmosphere where politics was taken seriously.

"Although my father never ran, he was a politician in his own mind," recalled Mrs. Bell. "He knew a lot of politicians whom I met through him."

As a result she has never been intimidated by important people, something which will benefit her regardless of what the people decide Nov. 12.



RON DANCEY
Leadership the issue

Dancey says leadership biggest campaign issue

By GREG COATES
Staff Reporter

Naming leadership as the biggest single issue in this year's election, mayoral candidate Ron Dancy is confident he has the qualities needed to run the Town of Markham.

As mayor, Mr. Dancy, 49, said he will bring a new openness to council and an "open-door policy" to the mayor's office.

He stressed that since the departure of former mayor Tony Roman, Markham Council has become more divided and has lost the team leadership it once had.

"Strong leadership is fundamental for successful government," said Mr. Dancy. "The events of the past 1½ years, and the concerns that have been expressed to me leave no question in my mind, the people of this community want a return to the decisive manner with which goals were established and then achieved. Markham wants and needs strong leadership."

He added that during his seven years on Markham Council, he has listened to the concerns, desires and aspirations of the people of Markham and understands what they want.

"There's more to being mayor than just cutting ribbons and picture taking," said Mr. Dancy. "You have to have a business person in there who knows finance and how to negotiate. It's a large corporation handling in excess of \$160 million per year."

Flexible

"A good mayor has to have an open mind, be flexible and able to deal with people," he added. "And when you have to say no, you do it quietly and diplomatically."

A strong believer in the democratic process, Mr. Dancy said the people of Markham didn't have a choice in February, 1984 (when Carole Bell was appointed mayor), but they do now.

"Markham is at a crossroad and this election will determine if the Town is going to return to the strong leadership it's always been used to or if it's going to go off in another direction," he said.

Noting that long-term planning is an essential part of Markham's future, Mr. Dancy said one of his top priorities as mayor will be to examine the report from a council-appointed task force for long-term capital and community facilities.

"I want to know exactly what things are going to cost," he said. "Not only the capital costs, but the operating costs as well. We have to plan ahead."

Speaking on the issue of planning and development, Mr. Dancy thinks growth in the Town of Markham is "running rampant and out of control."

Open space

"We need more open space," he said. "I don't think this system of all pavement and garages sticking out is good planning. We need high-quality, single-family housing."

He added that shoddy housing and cheap strip plazas should not be permitted in the Town.

Markham's traffic problem is another top concern. Mr. Dancy favors removing the jogs in major arteries, widening 14th and 16th avenues and getting started on Hwy 407.

"We should negotiate with the Region and the province to get this project underway," he said. "We can't wait 20 years. We need it now."

Calling the shortage of schools in Markham a crisis situation, Mr. Dancy said he's fully behind the school board's cause.

"I'm prepared to support the school board and go down with them to give their case to the Ministry (of Education)," he said. "If the problem continues we should negotiate with the developers. Maybe they'll put up the schools or make a contribution to get them started."

Transit

Improved transit is another key issue with Mr. Dancy.

"It's atrocious that a town the size of Markham doesn't have Sunday transit," he said, adding he's in favor of it. He'd also like to see extended evening service.

Also included in Mr. Dancy's top priorities are additional community facilities such as a library or community hall for Milliken; improved day care services; preserving Markham's heritage; and public safety.

Asked how his campaign is going, Mr. Dancy replied, "very well."

"I'm enjoying it. It's very exciting," he said. "It's good to have an election. Those who are acclaimed are missing out. I'm involved everyday and love it."

And predictions?
"We're going to win on the 12th," he said.

Mr. Dancy has been a resident of Markham for 16 years. He is married and has four grown children. Former owner of Markham's Cancos Collision, Mr. Dancy sold the business in 1982 and is now a full-time politician.



CAROLE BELL
Seeks mandate