

Patronage claim angers Uxbridge mayor

By CHRIS SHANAHAN
 UXBRIDGE TWP. Mayor Gerri Lynn O'Connor has seen red over a Council member's hint that a Township appointment smacks of patronage.

The mayor claimed any suggestion that former Ward 4 councillor Sandy Ewen's committee of adjustment posting was a political favor is "completely out of line."

"He (Mr. Ewen) is a person who was highly qualified in that field," mayor O'Connor said in a telephone interview Monday. "It certainly has nothing to do with patronage."

But Ward 1 councillor Cal Avery isn't so sure.

He said his opposition to Mr. Ewen's committee selection is in keeping with a promise made to

constituents during the Nov. 12 municipal election campaign.

The councillor said he doesn't mind an ex-councillor sitting on a non-paying committee, but feels it's different when the post pays a wage, as does the committee of adjustment. (Members of this planning panel receive \$30 per meeting and the chairman \$40).

"It looks a little bad," Mr. Avery said. "It looks like we're supporting the old group."

Mayor O'Connor stressed that the top priority when filling a position on the committee of adjustment is to choose the best representative for the township.

Amendments to the Planning Act now allow for a municipality to appoint seven adjustment members instead of five.

Uxbridge Township's increase

to seven members this term is designed to spread the committee's representation evenly throughout the township, according to the mayor. She made the original recommendation to Council.

At Thursday's meeting of Council, Mr. Avery was unsuccessful in his attempt to have the committee of adjustment appointment withdrawn from a by-law dealing with several municipal posts.

And when his tabling motion failed to gain a seconder, he called for a recorded vote on the complete by-law. Councillor Avery was the only dissenting voice in a 6-1 decision.

"I don't think the ratepayers should have to pay for two extra (members)," the ward 1 representative said afterward.

The issue, he added, "is a matter of principle to me" and has nothing to do with the personal integrity of any former elected official. Mr. Avery earlier objected

successfully to another past councillor's naming to Uxbridge Township's land division committee.

Mr. Ewen, a former chairman of the Township's planning and development committee, retired from municipal politics at the end of the 1982-85 municipal term.

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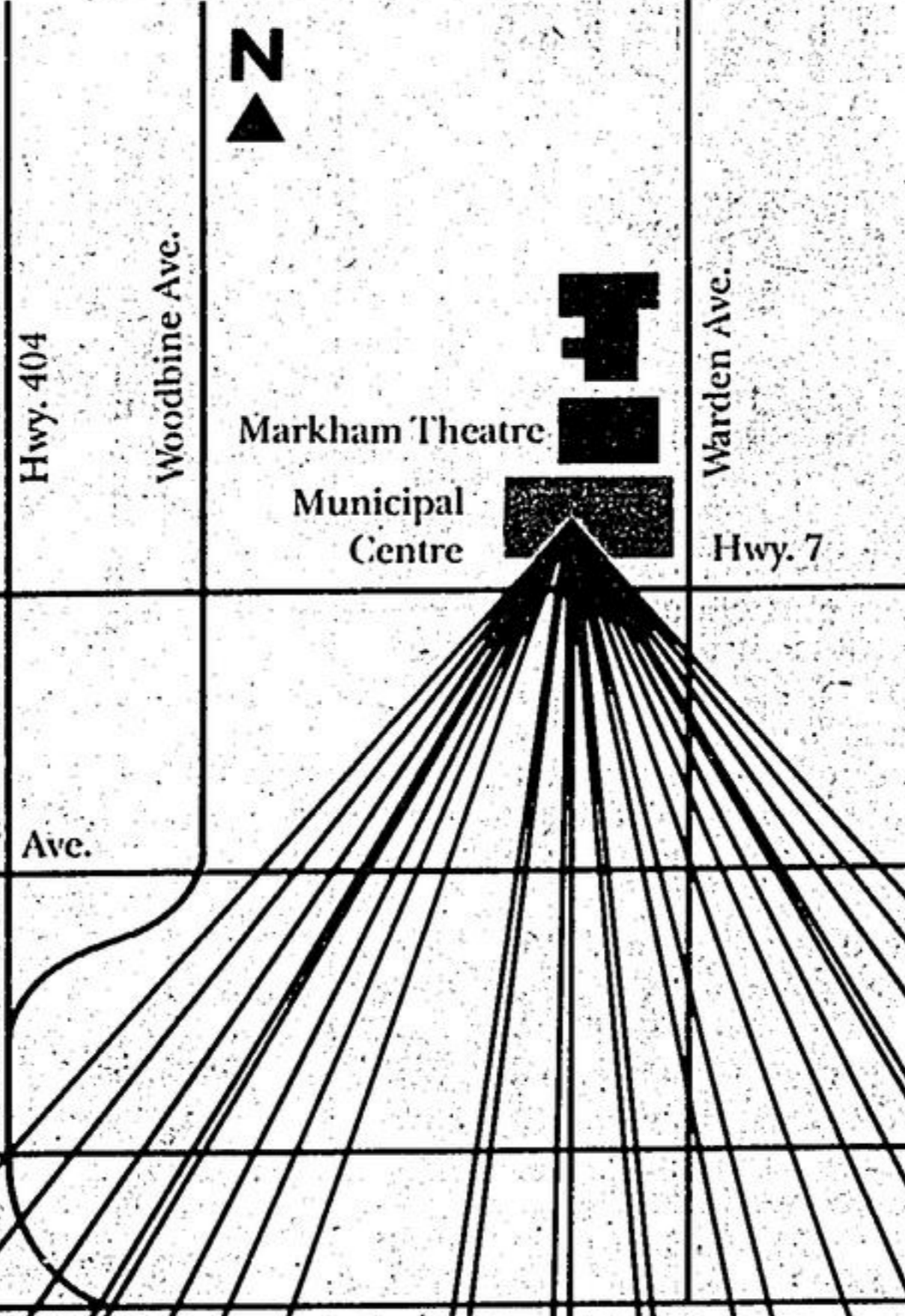
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