

# New French school for Region falls short for some parents

By GREG COATES  
Staff Reporter

Despite plans for a new French language school in southern York Region, many separate school supporters are not happy and are considering keeping their children in Metro.

At a meeting of the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board Tuesday, trustees approved the establishment of Ecole Sainte Marguerite Bourgeoys, a Junior Kindergarten (JK) to Grade 6 French language school in Richmond Hill.

Opening in September, the school will be housed temporarily — until funding is received for a new and separate facility — in Our Lady Help of Christians School on Bayview Ave.

Students eligible to attend the new school, including those from Markham, Unionville and Milliken, are currently bused to Sainte Madeleine School in Scarborough. Students from Whitchurch-Stouffville attend Ecole St. Jean in Newmarket.

With the opening of Sainte Marguerite in September, transportation to Sainte Madeleine will only

be provided for Grade 7 and 8 students. In 1987/8 only Grade 8 students will be bused.

(A Grade 7 program will be added at Sainte Marguerite in 1987 with a Grade 8 program to follow in 1988.)

However, many Francophone parents are not satisfied with the board's plans and feel their children's education will suffer because of a lack of facilities and services at the new Richmond Hill school.

Some are even planning to provide their own transportation and keep sending their children to Scarborough's Sainte Madeleine School.

## Parent delegation

Several parents attended Tuesday's meeting to express their concerns and request that the board continue providing transportation to Sainte Madeleine School.

Stephen Sheather of Unionville, who has two children currently attending Sainte Madeleine, said his main concern is getting a firm commitment from the board.

"It has yet to be determined

what quality of school it is going to be," he said. "We already know the quality we're getting now. I am informed that Sainte Marguerite Bourgeoys will not be on a par with the education my children currently receive in Metro."

## Equal access

Mr. Sheather is also upset because some residents in the Vaughan and King City areas will continue to have their children bused to Metro.

"All ratepayers should have equal access and equal alternatives," he said.

Although housed in an English school, Markham Trustee Terry Ryan said Sainte Marguerite will have its own sector of the school. It'll also have its own staff and library.

"It'll be two separate schools under one roof," he said, stressing it's only a temporary solution until a permanent facility is built.

Trustee Ryan said he's disappointed the board backed off from having Grades 7 and 8 included in the new school, but noted that trustees had no choice because of a lack of support from

parents. "I feel this is a good compromise position," he said.

## Car pools discussed

However, Mr. Sheather said several parents are discussing the idea of car pools to keep sending their children to Scarborough.

"Based on what we (the Sheathers) have heard, we're going to continue sending our children to Sainte Madeleine," he said, adding he believes the trustees have good intentions, but good intentions don't make quality education. "We need a commitment in dollars to get the quality education we're getting now."

Trustee Ryan stressed the board is committed to the establishment of the French school.

"The biggest objection was that there would be no French principal, but we now have one," he said. "For parents to pull out now is unreasonable. If they want a



Markham Trustee Terry Ryan.

French school in the area, they have to do their part to support it."

John Zupancic, director of education with the separate school board, said the school will be a success with good teachers and quality education.

"The education will be good, a good standard," he said. "Whatever is lacking (in services) in September, we'll go after."

The separate school board has been operating a French language school, Ecole St. Jean, in Newmarket since 1975.

# Buttonville plan given go-ahead

By STEVE HOUSTON  
Staff Reporter

The final nail was driven into the coffin for industrial development in Buttonville Wednesday when the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) supported a massive residential plan for the hamlet.

OMB Chairman Alfred Chapman ruled in a 50-minute statement that development on the 235-acre parcel of land would become residential.

Mr. Chapman referred to previous housing developments east of the site as "the first nail in the coffin" of future industrial development.

Hearings began in May regarding redesignation of the land to residential after Markham businessman Ron Femson objected to the proposal.

"The Town has the right to do what it has done here and that is amend its official plan," said Mr. Chapman. "The board makes its decision on the evidence...and is in the decision that the land should be designated urban-residential."

During testimony in the last days of the hearing the board heard pleas from both industrial and residential interests.

Iona Corporation President Jerald Silverberg and Equity Development Group Inc.'s Don Fleming spoke in favor of housing, while planner Man Makkar vied for industrial consideration.

Mr. Makkar was retained on behalf of objector Ron Femson's company, Woodbine Realty Ltd. Much debate centred on the residential-industrial balance with-

in Markham and the prime location of the land. Mr. Makkar said the site would be ideal in bringing Markham closer to "a healthy 35 (per cent)-65 (per cent)" balance.

"A strong industrial base is necessary to support community services," said Mr. Makkar, adding that Markham's current ratio is 29 per cent industrial and 71 per cent residential.

However, Town Solicitor Ray Kallio pointed out that Mr. Makkar's research only included mature municipalities such as Scarborough and Etobicoke.

He added that over the years, each municipality's industrial assessment increased, as is Markham's.

"You said Scarborough went from a lousy assessment to a healthy assessment in the last six years," said Mr. Kallio. "Would it not be fair then to assume that it takes time to get these favorable ratios?"

At Mr. Kallio's prodding, Mr. Makkar conceded and said the land would be suitable for both industrial and residential development.

Ward 7 Councillor Mike Popovich disagreed with the ruling and said each acre lost to residential zoning will now be critical to the Town's industrial base.

In closing statements, Mr. Chapman referred to Markham Council's promise to replace lost industrial land saying there is "sufficient time to bring lands on stream."

"It takes a long time to get to that 35/65 (per cent) split but the trend is definitely there," concluded Mr. Chapman.

# Overspending charges are dismissed against Roman

By PAULA CROWELL  
Staff Reporter

After a four-days trial, overspending charges against York North MP Tony Roman were dismissed on a technicality by a Provincial court judge Thursday.

The decision was reached the day after the lawyer for Mr. Roman's official agent threw a wild card into the proceedings.

Robert Syer said it was up to the Crown to prove that a written complaint had been filed with the Elections Commissioner. Since the complaint was never presented as evidence, Mr. Syer argued that the charges should be dropped.

Judge Hugh Zimmerman ruled that he would consider the point when he ruled on the case as a whole.

The former Markham mayor and Mr. Donkin were charged with spending \$11,358, which was unaccounted for in an expense re-



MP Tony Roman

port filed with the riding's returning officer. The spending limit for York North candidates is \$53,287.07. Mr. Roman declared expenses of \$52,751.98.

In his decision handed down Thursday the judge said, "The preliminary motion of Mr. Syer must be dismissed against Messrs. Donkin and Roman."

Even though he dismissed the case on a technicality, Judge Zimmerman noted that a verdict of not guilty would have been recorded anyway based on the evidence presented.

He said the accused men did their best to ensure the expense return to the riding's returning officer was correct, judging by Mr. Roman's testimony that he and Mr. Donkin reviewed it twice and sent it to an auditor for final approval.

While he admitted that Mr. Donkin might better have followed through on a no-charge invoice from Chairman Mills for table and chair rentals, he still believed that the official agent acted properly.

"From a practical point of view, it would be extremely difficult to expect an official agent to make certain every party worker on the campaign is reporting to him on a daily basis," Judge Zimmerman reasoned.

Had the charges not been dismissed, the two men would have been found not guilty, the judge said.

Mr. Roman was pleased with the outcome but said the Canada Elections Act ought to be reviewed.

"You almost need a comptroller in every candidate office," he said.

He added that such investigations should be carried out by an in-house body rather than by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. When asked whether he had any ideas about who made the initial complaint which sparked this investigation Mr. Roman said, "You draw your own conclusions."

In Monday's testimony the returning officer at the time of the election said the only individual who asked to see Mr. Roman's expense return was former York North MP John Gamble.

Mr. Gamble is a Markham lawyer who lost his seat as a Conservative to Mr. Roman in the 1984 federal election.

Following the trial, Mr. Donkin said he would not act as an official agent in future election campaigns.

## Ed and Claudette



Actually son, your mother's a good cook. I've just never been a lover of junk food.



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