

Uxbridge contest Mayor points to record

By KATE GILDERDALE
Uxbridge has seen more growth in her three year term as mayor than ever before, says Gerri Lynn O'Connor. And she's eager to continue work towards carefully planned expansion in the area, while addressing residents' needs and concerns.

A community-minded individual, she has served terms both as regional and ward councillor. She is pleased with the groundwork that has been laid for controlled growth in the last three years.

"We were able to do many studies, which will now give us the background to deal with the growth we feel we're going to experience and are now seeing in our community," she stated.

Mayor O'Connor pointed to the work that has been carried out on municipal roads. "We have paved in excess of 20 miles in the last three years, as well as putting in 12,000 linear feet of sidewalks in hamlets and urban areas."

Calling planned growth a priority, the Mayor also favors the development of township parks and a new facility for senior citizens.

She wants to see the continued upgrading of roads, particularly in the rural areas. She emphasized the importance of retaining the rural atmosphere in the municipality through careful planning.

"We're working with businesses to develop the BIA (Business Improvement Area)," she commented. "We also want to encourage a few clean industrial parks and to work with the aggregate producers to help reduce the negative impact the industry has on our residents."

Mayor O'Connor believes council should work with the provincial government to ensure that the Aggregates Act is passed.

"That would add considerable monies to our road program," she stressed. The act would impose levies on gravel operators to offset road repairs. She estimated the municipality would have received \$250,000 last year with a 5 cent per tonne levy on gravel loads.

"That money is a must," she maintained, adding that under the present council, regular

meetings have been set up with the aggregate producers to address problems from both sides.

"The producers have been very supportive of the municipality, going to the ministry on our behalf to get the (Aggregates) bill passed," said the Mayor.

Uxbridge Township was the first northern municipality to offer the blue box recycling program, she said.

"I worked really hard at the region for recycling. We've had it for six months and it's working very well."

On affordable housing, she felt that the meaning of the term hadn't been properly defined. "All Uxbridge is affordable if you use Toronto as a guide," she observed.

"However, I think it's very important that there is housing available to lower income families."

One proposal for non-profit housing had been put before council, noted the mayor, and considerable concern had been expressed about it at a public meeting.

"Council is going to try and answer those concerns."

Morley challenging Sainsbury's position



Whitchurch-Stouffville mayoral candidate Wilf Morley says the time is right for him to move into the mayor's chair on council. And he believes he's earned the title as a veteran councillor in the town. He has been chairman of the town's planning committee for the last five years.

By BRUCE STAPLEY
Wilf Morley, who for eight years has been beating his opponents in Ward 5 as if they were the family mule, is hopeful his vote-winning appeal will put him into the mayor's chair in this fall's Whitchurch-Stouffville municipal election.

The 56-year-old manager of administrative services for the York Region Board of Education feels the time is right for him to make the move and he believes he has earned the right to the headship of the Town.

"I would have given it a crack when Eldred King left to be regional chairman," says Morley. "But I had a job to go to. But if I win this time, I'll retire from the board in February. It's got to the point where you couldn't be mayor and hold another job."

Morley has spent five years as chairman of the town's planning committee, and another three years as finance chairman. He feels he has successfully resolved the complicated Westfield Estates problem and insists he was instrumental in the negotiations that resulted in the closing of the infamous landfill site north of Stouffville, the issue that catapulted Morley's mayoralty rival, Fran Sainsbury, into the mayor's chair.

And while he claims any projects that the present council completed this term were already on the table at the outset, he feels there are several issues that will have to be dealt with after the election. He lists sewage and water, a swimming pool, expanded town offices, fire protection for the rural areas and a library addition as being concerns the new council will have to address itself to.

"All these things impact upon us financially," he points out. "We need a plan. The people want to know when we're going to do these things."

"I think it's a 10-year plan and I know I have the leadership skills to pull these things off. I think I have the problem-solving and negotiating skills needed."

He admits it just won't be possible to have all those things in two or three years and that is why an overall plan is so vital. As for the sewage stalemate that has put new development for Stouffville on hold, Morley doesn't feel the situation is as bad as some people think. "I don't mind that we don't have sewage capacity now. That will give us a buffer time to plan future development. I want to be able to tell developers what we see as acceptable."

He believes the next council will have to play a major role in the development of the 404 corridor and would like to see an improvement in GO services.

Morley prides himself on handling people well and feels his years with the school board, combined with his years on council, have prepared him to deal with people as mayor. "My job with the board has always been personnel-oriented. You just learn from your experiences."

He says he has always had a good rapport with the people he has worked with. "They have always kept close ties, and come back to see me after they've moved on."

As for the commitment of time necessary for both councillors and the mayor, he claims it has become large. But he believes anyone running for municipal office must have a consuming desire to do what's good for the town.

"I still like to think of it as a community service. I like Whitchurch-Stouffville. I'm interested in where we're going."

He feels that sentiment must carry right through to one's approach towards the whole of York Region. "You can't just deal with your own municipality. We're very much a part of York Region, and we've got to do what is best for the whole region."

And if he should lose the upcoming election?

"I'd stay on and work for the York Region school board," he maintains, allowing that he isn't entertaining any thought of losing. He acknowledges that it is tougher running for mayor than for councillor.

"It's a grind running for mayor. I'm not soliciting funds and we'll be funding the campaign from my own bank account. If someone should make a donation, fine."

And he insists he's certainly not in it for the money. "If you are going into municipal politics for the money, then that's wrong. I don't think you can make proper decisions unless you have the best interests of the municipality at heart."

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