

# Stouffville has role to play: Sanders

By KATE GILDERDALE  
Ward 6 Councillor Jim Sanders is fighting population growth in Whitchurch-Stouffville, he just doesn't want the town "going out and looking for it."

He believes we must deal with growth as it comes, rather than seeking it out.

"We have to realize we're part of the region and there's a lot of growth all around here. We have a role to play within the region and part of that is being a smaller, rural-type community."

That, he says, is what gives the town its special appeal.

"What I'm most interested in is that we get our act together as to what we want in our community."

The town needs good administration and a staff with a keen interest in providing quality services, while keeping an eye on the budget, Councillor Sanders contends.

"I don't want to see a lot of dollars being spent on things we don't need. Instead I would like us to spend dollars, time and effort on recreation, culture and social services; things to make us a strong, healthy and lively community. That's what I mean when I talk about quality of life," says Councillor Sanders.

For major growth to occur it would require a provincial initiative.

Looking at aerial photos, it would seem logical that Milton should be the next area of growth.

Whenever major expansion occurs, it will require a new sewage system from Lake Ontario, observes Councillor Sanders, unless they come up with a new technique.

He doesn't see that kind of growth happening here.

"We should be putting our efforts into other things." If the Pickering area is chosen for expansion, "I can see our community being swallowed up. We have to get our house in order so we really know what we want and what sort of conditions we should demand to preserve our quality of life."

On the subject of affordable housing, Councillor Sanders notes: "It's ridiculous to think we can handle it by building housing and carrying on the same system



JIM SANDERS  
Community-minded

as in the past. If we say go ahead and build houses, they wouldn't be affordable to anyone. The problem is there's no subsidy for people who are just starting out. They have no way of obtaining accommodation."

Although such subsidies are out of municipal jurisdiction, Councillor Sanders says the town does have regular contact with politicians and staff at Queen's Park, which allows the municipality to express its concerns on issues like affordable housing.

"We do have influence as to how things are going to work out in the end."

The municipality, he says, must be informed on the different issues and make decisions that are in the best interests of the community.

"Those issues are getting bigger and bigger in York Region as we grow, and we don't have the institutions like affordable housing, day-care and transportation already in place as they do in the city."

If the community is to enjoy the benefits of an indoor pool, he doesn't want the onus to be on the taxpayer.

"Money will have to come from grants from the province and fundraising, plus what we already have in the way of lot fees in place right now," he comments.

With new industrial development taking place, he adds, more funds will become available.

"The rest has to be paid for by taking out a debenture and paying it off over 10 years," explains Councillor Sanders. This route has worked well for the recreation centre, he notes.

"It will be all paid for in 10 years. We have to decide what kind of pool we want and how we're going to manage the costs."

In the long term, he feels the municipality needs more staff to cope with an increasing workload.

"Managing the subdivisions is a major administrative problem we have to deal with." The installation of new traffic lights in town and how much support the province will provide must be addressed quickly, he notes.

He'd like to see the lights at Winona and Main installed first, with Stouffer and Main the next priority. Moving the downtown lights to Mill and Market Streets would help relieve traffic congestion, "but the other two are safety problems, so they should be done first."

Councillor Sanders says he wants careful control on budgets. "We're trying to get the costs down and avoid carrying on with programs just because they were done before. We have to examine everything."

As far as new municipal offices are concerned, he believes in a cautious approach.

"If growth doesn't come, we might be stuck with huge municipal offices in the country

somewhere. We don't want to get into that situation. We should make the most efficient use of what we have. We should be putting money into services rather than property-buying."

Councillor Sanders says he's optimistic about the future and

he's happy to see change, but I like setting priorities too and trying to effect the change to help everyone get along better."

"I haven't heard people saying they want a lot of growth; they just say it's inevitable."

If a tree keeps growing and growing, it will topple over because it gets too big for its roots," he concludes. "We don't want this to happen here."

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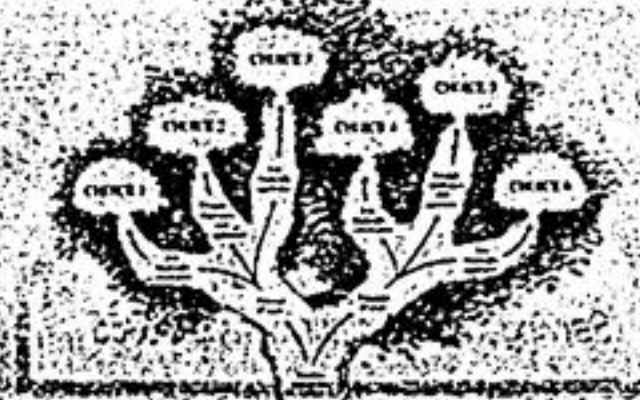
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