

Lack of water system hampers builders' plans

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

A local doctor's dream to construct a medical centre in Ballantrae is being shattered by delays and now "timing is critical," council heard Tuesday.

Dr. John Bare has been trying to get approval for construction of medical offices at the corner of Iroquois Drive and Hwy 48 in Ballantrae since 1989.

But delays in approving a piped water system for Musselman Lake and Ballantrae is hampering plans, says Bare's representative and former town building inspector Bruce Arrowsmith.

"I'm running out of funds and out

of time to make this happen," Bare told local officials Tuesday night.

Arrowsmith said Bare wants a public meeting scheduled to ensure money spent on further studies will not be wasted.

Need approval

"We understand the concerns and implications of ground water contamination but we just want the planning process to proceed to the public hearing stage to give us some flexibility," Arrowsmith said.

He added the plans emerged two years ago when it was "thought the water (system) would be available (in 1991.) Now it's realized the system won't be installed even in 1992," Arrowsmith said.

Ward 2 Councillor Stephen

Bellerby asked how efficient the proposed private septic system at the site would be to ensure surrounding wells are protected.

Arrowsmith said he was willing to "dig to the third aquifer" to ensure safe health standards and added there would be about 4,100 litres coming from the building a day - equivalent to the amount from "one and a half (residential dwellings) - a scale-down from the original plan of 18,000 litres a day.

Prepared

And although he said York Region health unit is "prepared to approve the development on private sewage," town planning director Michael Saunders warned officials there are many holes in the plan.

"There are a lot of things to think about here before making a decision," Saunders told officials.

Saunders said the site is located in an area prone to flooding and that no decision should be made on any construction in the area until the water system and other problems are resolved.

"What leaves this site may affect surrounding properties which could create a problem (with well contamination)," Saunders said.

He added there are 15 other applicants from Ballantrae that want to construct local commercial businesses.

An approval of this plan could be precedent setting, Saunders added.

But the plans have already been

scaled down by 33 per cent to meet health unit and government agency concerns of ground water contamination, Arrowsmith said.

Into a hole

"Each delay puts me deeper and deeper into a hole," and a public hearing would speed up the planning process by two to three months, Bare added.

Ward 6 Councillor Jim Sanders said the key issue was to ensure "water (quality) is protected for surrounding residents."

Council voted to allow the proposal to go to a public hearing but said reports from outside agencies must be completed and approved by the town's review consultant, Gartner Lee.

Gormley plans not to be 'dump yard:' Mayor

Whitchurch-Stouffville won't accept outside storage uses at Gormley Industrial Park, whether a scaled-down version of the project is approved or not, it was confirmed Tuesday.

Council was opposed to York Region's approval of outside storage on an application recently and said this week it does not fit the Gormley plans.

"Whitchurch-Stouffville does not wish to be a dumping yard to other areas that want to be serviced on the big pipe," Mayor Fran Sainsbury told proponents.

She added the town has already told Gormley residents there would be no outside storage and approval of it now would have "mislead" homeowners in the area.

Local officials heard two more proposals to construct industrial subdivisions in Gormley, but are not supporting the individual requests.

Cardico Developments Ltd. and Gormley Business Park Ltd. owners filed their own separate application following York Region's approval of a scaled-down version in January (Armbro-Buttton, A10.)

However, local officials want only to proceed with development "under the auspices of OPA60," Ward 5 Councillor Doug Alles told applicants at the meeting.

OPA60 is the original plan to build a 1,300-acre industrial park at Woodbine Avenue and council does not want to "piecemeal" the project by approving separate applications.

Town Chief Administrative Officer Bob Panizza told The Tribune the Municipal Affairs Ministry is obligated, under the Planning Act, to refer OPA60 in its entirety to the Ontario Municipal Board.

But because the plan is "on the backburner, individual developers are going alone" in hopes their proposal will be approved on a smaller scale, Panizza said.

"One by one they will all end up at the ministry (for OMB approval) and they'll have to look at OPA60," Panizza said.

However, Alan Paton, solicitor for Gormley Business Park Ltd., told officials the "reality is that OPA60 will never be approved," and urged council to approve each application on its own merit.

Council supported staff recommendation to not support the Cardico or the Gormley Business Park proposals.



Photo/STEVEN PEER

Caught on a wire

Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire Department officials worked to free a truck owned by Laird and Sons after it ran into overhead wires. The driver of the truck was forced to remain in the cab because of

the fear of electrocution. Here, Fire Chief Bill Brown (at right) supervises the operation as workers cut the wire. The incident occurred on Friday morning of last week.

Something has got to give Too many restrictions

Stouffville has to re-think the whole process when it comes to small development in this community, Mayor

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

Whitchurch-Stouffville is going to have no future development if strict guidelines are not eased up on, said one local councillor Tuesday.

Ward 1 Councillor Margot Marshall told officials "something has got to give" if the community is to increase its commercial and industrial tax base.

Marshall was referring to a proposal to build a medical centre in Ballantrae, which has been delayed two years because there is not a piped water system in the area.

Dr. John Bare wants to proceed with the public hearing and wants council approval in principle before spending more money on groundwater-contamination studies.

Hold off

Meanwhile, town planning director Michael Saunders said council should hold off making a decision on the matter until a commitment is made for a communal water system.

But Marshall said York Region and the government has already frozen or mixed the Gormley plans

by placing strict guidelines for industrial development on private services or "dry land."

And the town has placed a freeze on development in Musselman Lake and Ballantrae and other parts of the community until sewage and water problems are solved.

"What is left?" Marshall asked.

"We're probably the only municipality to be super careful but we have to do something," Marshall added.

Re-think process

And Mayor Fran Sainsbury agreed the town should re-assess some applications for small-scale development.

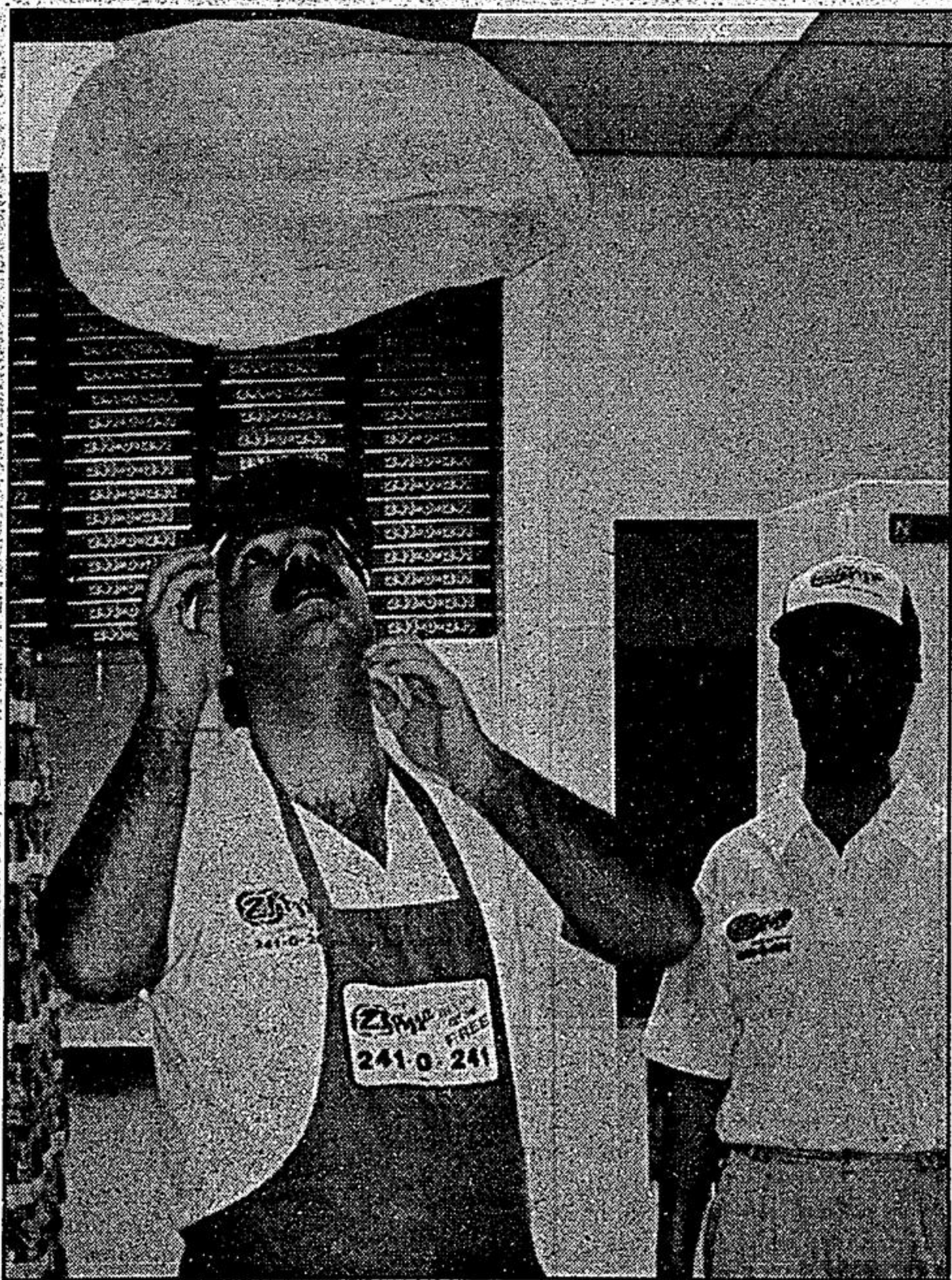
"We have to re-think the whole process when it comes to small development in this community," Sainsbury said.

She added applicants that are left dangling should be given public hearings before studies are approved.

"There is plenty of time later to do the studies," Sainsbury said.



MARGOT MARSHALL



Photo/STEVEN PEER

Business making dough

Stouffville has a new pizza parlor on Main St. 241 Pizza opened on Friday and gave away free slices. From left,

Bahman Jalalifar and Morteza Amiriyaghoobi prepare pizzas for the customers who visited the shop on its first day.

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