

Brownies CAN help



Members of the Stouffville Brownie Pack 5 held up donations to the Whitchurch-Stouffville Foodbank during an excursion to The Tribune's office on Main Street last week.

Council may opt to shed bylaw

SAL BOMMARITO
Staff Reporter

Utility sheds not requiring a building permit would be exempt from the town's setback requirement if council approves a proposed bylaw amendment.

Council passed a recommendation last week to hold a public meeting, as required under the Planning Act, to give Whitchurch-Stouffville residents the opportunity to air their views on the issue.

Ward 2 councillor Steve Bellerby said the town shouldn't dictate to a property owner "where a 10 by 10 building should be located. People know where to put them." Bellerby supported a staff recommendation to hold a public meeting on the issue.

But Ward 6 councillor Ken Prentice isn't too sure exempting the utility sheds which are violating

the town's setback requirement is the right decision.

Prentice is against holding a public meeting on the amendment and his motion to have the item deferred was defeated by council. Prentice believes, rather than changing the law, the town should hire an inspector on a contract position "until the problem is resolved."

"We're sacrificing our property standards by relaxing our laws," said Prentice.

Under the town's building code, an "accessory" building having a floor area of 10 square metres or less does not require a building permit. However, under the present



BELLERBY

bylaw, the building must be setback at least 1.5 metres from any other building and 1.2 metres from the rear lot line.

Retailers who sell the utility sheds are partly to blame for the confusion surrounding the bylaw, said the town's chief building officer.

"The public are advised when purchasing these small buildings by the retailer that they do not need a building permit to erect their garden shed, but they fail to advise the purchaser of the zoning setback requirements," said Bennett.

Sonshine Square appears at board to challenge ruling

The organizers of Sonshine Square made a presentation to York Region Board of Education trustees Monday night at the board offices in Aurora.

The club, which last year offered a noon hour Bible club in four local elementary schools, is fighting a recent ruling by the Ontario government which forbids them to hold meetings on school property during lunch recess.

"What we're going to do is challenge (the board) to represent the people who have elected them," explained parent volunteer Pat Ratcliff.

Results of the meeting with the board were not available at press time. Watch for an update in *The Weekender*.

Citizens group to assist in Ward 6

JOHN ANDREWS
Correspondent

Politicians are always being criticized for breaking election promises but Ward 6 councillor, Ken Prentice is trying to break that trend and follow through by forming the Citizens Action Team.

Prentice said the team is, "an extra set of eyes and ears for myself." The main objective is to make it easier for Ward 6 residents to bring comments and criticisms to Prentice who will then take them to council.

If the councillor is not available or if residents would feel more comfortable talking to a regular neighbor, a group of contacts has been formed so people can perhaps

feel more at ease in discussing what the council is or isn't doing. The contacts are Bob Stover, Malcolm and Shirley Wilson, Pat Byer and Keith and Kathy Sutherland.

Prentice said he wants to hear the good and the bad but said, "I don't want it to be a complaint taking agency." He said people are encouraged to bring forth new ideas and goals for the ward and the town. He said people should think about the good and the bad of their complaint or idea and perhaps have a solution in mind when they make their concerns known.

Prentice said by encouraging residents to become involved, it will streamline the process and the team, "won't get bogged down in the negative."

The Citizens Action Team held their first meeting on Jan. 16 for what Prentice called, "a strategy session to discuss the plans and purpose of the team."

The team, which ideally would involve every resident of Ward 6, is planning two public meetings this year, one in May and one in November to discuss council initiatives and take the formality out of the process.

Topping their agenda is educating people about municipal government and providing them with a diagram of where to direct questions within the town hall. The team also wants to make an organizational chart of who is responsible for what in municipal government.

Prentice said he hopes the team will be successful and will help make Whitchurch-Stouffville a better place to live.

He said there are a lot of talented people in the community and Prentice wants them to get involved and share their ideas.



PRENTICE

Man injured in plow crash

A local man was critically injured after his mini van collided with a snow plow at a Whitchurch-Stouffville intersection Friday afternoon.

York Regional Police said a Chevy mini van was travelling north on McCowan Rd. at 2:45 p.m. when the driver failed to stop at the intersection at Vandorf Rd.

The van crashed into a west-bound snowplow.

Van driver Robert Farley, 44, of Stouffville was taken to Markham Stouffville Hospital then transported by air ambulance to St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto where he was listed in critical condition.

The plow driver, also a Stouffville resident, was not hurt.

Police said charges may be laid.

Police charge third man in local theft investigation

Police arrested a Stouffville man Sunday after an investigation into car thefts last May.

Two teens were charged May 28, 1991 after being found in possession of two stolen cars.

A third stolen car has since been discovered and the teens face additional charges. A third person, a 19-year-old Stouffville man, was charged Sunday with three counts of possession of stolen property over \$1,000, conspiracy to commit an indictable offence, possession of house break tools and possession of a master key.

The two teens face identical charges.

Two robbery suspects left empty-handed after a failed attempt at opening the cash register of a Stouffville store.

At 8:20 p.m. Friday, two men, both armed with hand guns and disguised with ski masks, entered the Vandorf General Store at Woodbine Ave. and Vandorf Rd.

One suspect demanded money but was unable to open the cash register. Both men fled on foot and were last seen travelling north on Woodbine Ave.

An all-terrain vehicle was reported stolen from a Stouffville garage Friday.

The vehicle had a snow plow attached and is valued at \$6,000. It was apparently stolen from an Aurora Rd. house.

CRIME WATCH

Superboxes leaving residents out in cold

JOHN ANDREWS
Correspondent

Through rain, sleet, snow and dark of night, the postal superbox is a safe place to store the mail. But last week the superboxes were too safe because the freezing rain and sub-arctic temperatures locked people out of their boxes with no way to retrieve their mail.

Canada Post provides a 1-800 number to give assistance to anyone experiencing superbox problems but getting through can be problem enough.

The Tribune's own Kate Gilderdale found herself in this state and phoned the number.

After a 15 minute wait on hold, being cut off and then a 10 minute wait, Gilderdale reported her frozen superbox and was told it would be opened before the end of the following day.

This was not the case and after calling the number again, Gilderdale was told to ask the post office to hold her mail and pick it up directly.

While this was an exceptional case, the post office does not recommend this action.

John Caines is the manager of media relations for Canada Post and said the superboxes are serviced twice a year. If there is a problem with opening the box, the customer should call the 1-800 number and a crew should be on the scene within 24 hours.

Freezing of postal superboxes is not a common occurrence in Ontario and Caines said, "generally it depends on which way the box is facing."

He said if a box is facing the wind and rain, it stands a good chance of getting frozen shut.

Caines called the storm last week a "freak storm," and said people tried using lock de-icer. This does work over time but Gilderdale said she tried lock de-icer and it didn't work initially. When she did retrieve her mail it was stained and smelled of the alcohol-based substance.

Some people tried pouring hot water over the superbox locks and while this does work in the short term, it will freeze the lock again and freeze any other lock the water spilled on while running down the face of the superboxes.

Because of the speed and severity of the storm last week, Caines said the crews got behind and that caused some delays in servicing the boxes.

(See Kate's Corner, P. 4)

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