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The Town of Markham-Stouffville? Plan for region's future may eliminate some municipal boundaries

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

The Town of Markham-Stouffville.

That just might be a reality 20 or 30 years down the road if some regional politicians have their way, warns Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Fran Sainsbury.

"Regional council will discuss this, and some politicians are strong advocates of annexation," Sainsbury said.

She told regional politicians during a meeting in Newmarket last week that she doesn't want municipal boundaries "examined" in the future, saying the move will mark the end

of York's three rural communities.

Sainsbury brought up the issue during discussions of the region's Vision 2021 final draft report which will be incorporated into its Official Plan this fall.

The Vision document shares ideas and suggestions from the public and politicians which

describes the overall shape and direction York Region should take during the next 30 years.

Sainsbury said one section of the 24-page report involving role of regional government states that municipal boundaries should be examined as to the number and size of municipalities.

Sainsbury said while there's been no formal meetings to discuss the issue, several politicians have stressed the necessity to reduce York's nine municipalities down to four or five.

"The larger municipalities would benefit from this giving them a wider tax base to pay for their fancy fire halls and buildings to help them pay their bills," she said.

The mayor said informal talks about Markham taking over Whitchurch-Stouffville, Richmond-Hill taking Aurora, Newmarket taking East Gwillimbury and Georgina remaining on its own have taken place.

But regional councillor Carole Bell, of Markham, said Sainsbury forgets the Vision document is a "pie in the sky" statement to be used as a future planning guideline with "no legal teeth."

"Mayor Sainsbury consistently finds bogey men in everything York Region puts through and she couldn't be more wrong," Bell said.

"No one wants to take over Whitchurch-Stouffville, but who knows what can happen in 15 years. We would be less than honest with the public if we

said we weren't going to look at it," Bell said.

She accused Sainsbury of ignoring the "greater picture" and called her comments "foolish, naive and unprofessional."

"Comments like this only lose more points for her community," Bell said.

Bell said the public made it clear during Vision meetings earlier this summer that they wanted less government intervention and the option to re-examine municipal boundaries gives York a "broader outlook" for the future. "You have to allow for whatever comes down the line," Bell said.

York council voted down Sainsbury's motion to scrap the option that will allow the region to take a second look at municipal boundaries.

Mayor says report unfair to small towns

York Region's "picture of the future" will force Whitchurch-Stouffville into debt if certain funding commitments for small municipalities aren't considered, said Mayor Fran Sainsbury this week.

Sainsbury told York Region politicians Thursday that its Vision 2021 final draft report will leave rural municipalities "bankrupt" if it intends to freeze development in

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Photo: LORI EMMERSON

I'm up next

Karina Briggs seems intent on taking the batting step up to the plate. Matthew was participating in the Stouffville 11-Ball tournament Saturday.

Stouffville post office to serve commercial customers only

The services offered by the Stouffville Postal Station on Main Street are being altered to commercial-use only.

Canada Post announced Monday morning that the station will become a Com-

mercial Service Centre (CSC) as of Oct. 1, 1993. The CSC will serve the needs of commercial postal customers by providing postal box service for medium and large volume receivers, postage meter

settings, the sale of Priority Courier, volume postage sales, bag service and postage paid in cash acceptance.

Regular customers will have to use retail postal outlets in town such as in

Shoppers Drug Mart on Main Street, or the Gormley Postal Unit at Woodbine and Hwy 47. Stamps can be purchased at both Main Street Beckers and the IGA on Main Street.

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