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Candidates don't like town hall plan

By **JOAN RANSBERRY**
 Staff Reporter

The proposal for a new town hall-library-art gallery complex is not getting the green light from any of the four candidates running in the Ward 2 by-election Dec. 13.

The project, slated for the existing library site and valued at about \$2.5 million, will return to Whitchurch-Stouffville Council for debate in the New Year.

It's appropriate to wait until the new councillor is sworn in, said Mayor Wayne Emmerson. Candidate Mike Watson is against any plan to spend taxpayers' money on a new town hall.

When an issue is apt to attract a large crowd, the meeting can be held in Latcham Hall, said Watson.

"I know a guy who's agreed to carry the overhead from the council chamber over to Latcham to save us from spending all that money on a new town hall," said Watson. He added: "It's just a stupid time to be building this."

Emmerson called Watson to his office to discuss the town hall project. The meeting took place Friday.

Before the meeting, Watson said: "The mayor called me. He knows I'm against this. He wants me to go over the details. I want to show that I'm willing to cooperate and listen."

However, the mayor didn't convince him, he reported Monday.

Ward 2 challenger Roland Kontgen said a public review is in order. "There should be a public hearing so the people can get involved in the process. If the people don't want it, it should be put on the back burner," said Kontgen.

Two weeks ago, council rejected a request for a public

meeting on the issue.

While challenger Carol Davis is pleased that the new councillor will be part of the decision-making process, she's against any move to forge ahead. "Since the province might make major changes to the makeup of the municipalities, the call for a new town hall is 'premature,'" stressed Davis. "We could be adopted," she added.

Candidate Richard Farmer agrees with the direction council is taking, stressing that the council chamber is too small. "As soon as there is a contentious issue, people are out in the hall," said Farmer.

Still, Farmer said other options need to be explored. Council meetings could be held in community centres and schools around town including in Vandorf and Ballantrae, said Farmer. "A new hall is inevitable. In the long range, the current council is on the right track," said Farmer.



Gotcha!

John Duxbury sneaks up and then pounces on one of the many tasty treats available at the Goodwood Bake and Craft Sale on Saturday.

Photo/LORI EMMERSON

'Vision' workshops wrap up next week

By **JOAN RANSBERRY**
 Staff Reporter

The journey to determine Stouffville's future is almost over.

The Framing the Vision workshops were struck to determine what goes where in the part of town known as old Stouffville.

The next workshop is on Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. at the Latcham Hall.

Lead by study consultant Elizabeth Howson, the evening meeting will mark the fourth time members of the public gather together to help with the Secondary Plan process. To date, about 100 residents have taken part. Howson explained that the common threads emerging from the workshop include the need to preserve the existing friendly and safe character of the community as well as the viability and heritage value of Main Street.

Howson further stressed that workshop participants see the need to enhance the green spaces throughout the community by creating a trail system for pedestrians and

bicycles. "In the next few weeks, Howson's study team will formulate land-use alternatives taking into account the results of the public workshops."

Also, the Framing the Vision background report is now available at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library and at the Whitchurch-Stouffville municipal office.

While a 10-member committee has spun a few common threads in its planning mission, a cross section of Stouffville residents, including youth, seniors and cultural focus groups, continue to be given a chance to also help set the town's future planning agenda.

Workshop participants put in "a tremendous amount of effort and were extremely creative," said Howson.

Issues covered include the environment, land use and design, transportation, growth forecasts, economic development and servicing. Also, several people indicated that it was important to create a "stronger economic base" by allowing carefully planned additional commercial and industrial development while preserving the "friendly small town atmosphere and attributes of the community," he added.

The Framing the Vision exercise will produce a document to be ready for York Regional council's approval in June.

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Youths appear in cemetery case

One of three youths charged with vandalizing the Stouffville cemetery was to make a court appearance Tuesday. The youths, all 16-year-old males, were arrested in mid-October 1995 after police discovered 42 headstones toppled or broken.

As well, flowers were trampled and beer bottles strewn about. The three were arrested after a three-week investigation which included a great deal of support from the public. The other two are to appear Dec. 18.

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