

Adult development prompts queries about water supply

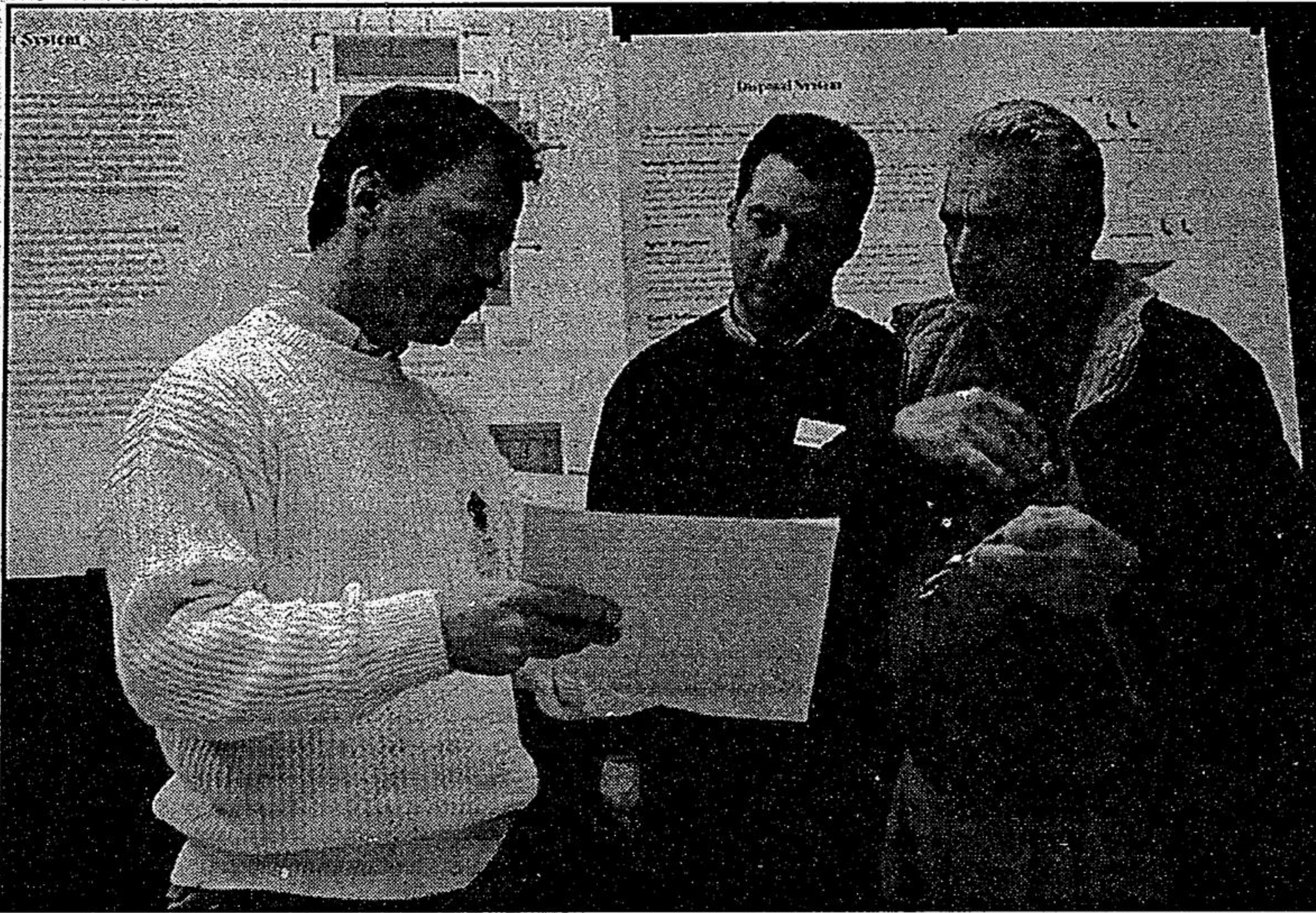
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Most of the residents of the new development will be 50 years and older, while the development will take about 15 years to complete.

About 80 per cent of the homes will be one-storey bungalows, while the rest will be link

houses. "We had an amazing response from the local community on Tuesday. It was well received," said Forhan Jr.

The development will be a condominium setup with residents owning the houses and the lots, while all outdoor upkeep is done for the residents.



Residents come to see development

More than 325 residents showed up this week to see the new 950-home development plans slated for Ballantrae. Many voiced concerns over water issues.

Photo/BREE CAMPBELL

Optometrists rage against Tory plans to cut OHIP eye exams

By JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Reporter

A proposal to have the cost of eye examinations removed from Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) warrants a call to York-Durham MPP Julia Munro, a local optometrist has stated.

Removing eye exam service from OHIP is yet another example of the "weakest in society being asked to pay the most," said Stouffville optometrist Dr. Martin McDowell.

The \$50 market price of an eye exam would be cost prohibitive for many people, said McDowell. Such a move would mean some people won't get the needed testing, he added. "Those who can't afford will stay away," he said.

McDowell, one of 1,050

Ontario optometrists, is advising Stouffville residents to join him in filing an official complaint at Munro's office located in Ballantrae.

To contact Julia Munro, call 640-3855.

Eye health is the next target of the Ontario government's efforts to cut money out of the health budget, officials of the Ontario Association of Optometrists state.

"De-insuring eye exams is unacceptable," said Kniaziew.

Under current contract negotiations, officials representing government and the province's doctors are looking to trim \$50 million from the annual \$3.8-billion tab of the OHIP.

Meanwhile, two separate committees are looking at ways to cut health costs.

There are signs indicating that a plan to stop OHIP coverage for basic eye care for the 18 to 64 age group is weakening. Ontario Health Minister Jim Wilson told the Toronto media a few days ago that it might not be a total "delisting" of eye care services.

Ontarians might be entitled to one examination a year, said Wilson.

Kniaziew pointed out that eye examinations have been covered by OHIP for 24 years. "Eye health is so important to every individual that it is inconceivable to us that any government would fail to protect its citizens," he said.

The most commonly reported health problem affecting daily life is vision, said McDowell.



McDOWELL



BELL

Carole Bell moving here

Regional Councillor Carole Bell, Markham's longest-serving municipal politician, has decided to retire and move to Whitchurch-Stouffville.

This fall's municipal election will be the first time in almost 25 years that Bell has not run a campaign for a council seat, a regional seat or the mayor's chair.

"I haven't really made a big deal about it," Bell told *The Weekender*. "But it was quite a decision to make - it's been 25 years since I was first elected. But everybody has to start looking at changes in lifestyle, after all. I'll be 63 in May."

Bell said the fact her Fred Varley Dr. home sold during her annual month in Florida turned the tide.

"I wanted to make the move but I represent people in my community and that was a stumbling block. Now that the house has sold, there's not much point in setting up house somewhere else in Markham just for a few years."

She added that she would have been prepared to work for another year or two, but that committing for another three-year term was just too much.

Bell was first elected in 1972 and has served on every town committee during her career. She was first elected regional councillor in 1978 and served as mayor from 1983 to 1988.

Bell added she's looking forward to a move north to the Stouffville hamlet of Vandorf, at Hwy. 404 and Aurora Rd., and to spending more time golfing, travelling and being with her family.

Candidates emerging

By CHRIS KEUKEN
Correspondent

With a federal election approaching, the line-up of candidates is beginning to take shape.

The Progressive Conservatives and the Liberals already have their candidates, while the NDP and the Reform Party have yet to hold nomination meetings.

The riding, which includes north Markham, Whitchurch-Stouffville and Richmond Hill, will see John Andersen running for the PCs and Bryan Wilfert for the Liberals.

Wilfert was elected the Liberal candidate after the first ballot on March 2. He believes he was selected because of his political experience which includes sitting on Richmond Hill Council for 12 years, and his past dealings with the federal government through his involvement with various national committees.

Wilfert said he isn't going to make all sorts of promises that won't be kept.

"People want to know who they're going to get," he said. "I have the federal experience and contacts. It's good to have those doors open to you. I'll be able to take the ball and run with it."

John Andersen won his candidacy on the first ballot on Tuesday night by a 75-vote margin over two challengers. Also, seeking the nomination were Al Duffy and Sherri Walker.

Andersen believes there is a new understanding among voters. He said people want integrity and credibility.

"I think I bring those qualities to the table. It's a refreshing, new element in politics." Andersen wants to see taxes cut, a revitalization of the private sector, which he believes is where the long-lasting jobs are, and a tougher approach to crime.

"If you do the crime, you'll do the time," said Andersen.

The NDP and the Reform Party have yet to select candidates.

The NDP is having its nomination meeting May 1 at the Richmond Hill Public Library starting at 7:30 p.m. The only declaration of intention as of yet is by Wynne Hart Viksen.

The Reform Party hasn't set a firm date for its nomination meeting, although it is tentatively scheduled for April 23 in Richmond Hill.

There are potential candidates, said a riding association official. However, it is unknown if Joe Sherren, who ran for Reform in the Markham Whitchurch-Stouffville riding in the 1993 federal election, will seek the seat.

John Alden, communications officer for the Reform Party's Oak Ridges riding association, said Sherren is still on the sidelines.

"If Joe (Sherren) runs now," he said, "the other nominees will likely drop out."



WILFERT



ANDERSEN

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