

Lansing Buiddall, Home Depot set for superstore battle in region

PATRICK CASEY
Staff Reporter

York Region will be the battleground between two home improvement giants as Lansing Buiddall proceeds with a massive expansion plan in hopes of closing the gap with American rival Home Depot.

Following a merger with British Columbia's Revelstoke Home Centres last month, Lansing has unveiled a \$200-million plan to construct 10 new superstores throughout Greater Toronto within the next five years. This includes new 160,000-square-foot superstores in Richmond Hill and Vaughan, in addition to the existing store in Markham.

The move will more than double the existing nine stores.

Lansing has purchased the former Edean Nurseries property on Yonge Street, just north of Elgin Mills. Discussions are continuing to secure a site in Vaughan.

"Richmond Hill really seems like a perfect fit because the

town is moving forward and we already do a lot of business from the community at our Willowdale and Markham branches," explained Howard Kitchen, director of marketing for Lansing Buiddall.

"We get the feeling that there are opportunities for both Richmond Hill and Vaughan, especially when 50 per cent of our business comes from trade people. It makes it terribly convenient for them when we have a store in these major areas."

Home Depot is a leader in the U.S.-style big-box stores, with outlets in Markham and Woodbridge, as well as a new store that opened in Newmarket earlier this month.

Home Depot, formerly Aikenheads, flourished during the last decade's recession, which hit the building industry hard. Many home improvement chains either downsized their operations or closed.

Lansing survived through a centralized distribution centre, a new computer delivery link and an enhanced information

BUSINESS

system.

However, the joint venture between Lansing and Revelstoke has created a \$700-million company that expects to hit \$1 billion in sales by 2003.

"With the combined strength of Revelstoke and Lansing, we will now have the capital resources and Revelstoke expertise to grow faster than we would have had on our own," added Lansing president John Kitchen.

Patterned after a superstore that opened in Scarborough last week, the Richmond Hill and Vaughan stores will feature an 80,000-square-foot store with an 80,000-square-foot drive-through lumber yard.

Both outlets are expected to open within the next two years, providing more than 100 full and part-time jobs at each location.

And with 15,000 hours dedi-

■ Please see page 12 ■



WELL-DESERVED BREAK: From left: Bruce English, George Beckingham, and Jack Greenhow take a relaxing coffeebreak as they do the grounds at a nearby church Wednesday.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

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