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BUSINESS: No Frills buys produce store

Weston sold

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

Weston Produce will become a Loblaw's No Frills at the end of the year, *The Stouffville Tribune* has learned. Joe Tavernese, co-owner of Weston Produce, confirmed the 19,000-square-foot Main Street grocery store has been sold to No Frills. "Yes, we've sold. We're leaving at the end of the month," Tavernese said. Tavernese and his brother Nick have owned and operated Western Produce for five years. At this time, it is not known how the change of ownership will affect Western Produce's 60 employees, Tavernese said. In April, Loblaw's asked Whitchurch-Stouffville for clearance to buy Bob Myer's dealership with a plan to build a 25,000-square-foot No Frills on the Main Street site. This plan was met with stiff opposition from people employed in the Stouffville food industry. Loblaw's officials were not available for comment.

Teachers shouldn't strike, parents say

FROM PAGE 1

"We're asking that they put in place a mechanism so, even though teachers are allowed to have their union, we don't think they should have the ability to let the dispute affect kids." Spark said future contract negotiations should exclude the right to strike, work-to-rule or lock out teachers. "We're not lawmakers, we don't presume to know what kind of mechanism to replace it with. But nobody has come out to defend the children in this," Spark said. Board vice-chairperson Karen Barker agreed there will likely be more teacher disputes in York Region. "As long as we have a salary and benefit package that exceeds (provincial) funding, we will be in the same situation," said Barker, who believes that, while the system still works, it is flawed.

"We certainly don't want teachers to feel we're against them, but we don't support strike action."

Spark said parents she has talked with aren't against teachers or the board, but are advocating what's best for their children.

"I don't necessarily blame the teachers and I feel the board is also responsible," she said. "We certainly don't want teachers to feel we're against them, but we don't support strike action. It has been very disruptive, especially to children in elementary school — they don't understand why they can't go to school."

However, a fax campaign may not be enough to convince politicians such as York Centre MPP Al Palladini, who said he and his Tory colleagues have talked about removing the right to strike. But they still believe the current process is working.

"I completely understand how those parents must feel about these disruptions. There's no question labour relations in York Region have been difficult to deal with," Palladini said.

Catholic parents in York Region had to endure three weeks of a strike in September before the province legislated them back to work. And those teachers are still without a contract.

Durham-York MPP Julia Munro also said teachers should retain the right to strike, but has asked the minister of education to review the laws governing teacher negotiations.

"Both parents and teachers have told me they feel there are problems with the process," she said.

Local secondary school union president Gerry Harrison said he believes the current bargaining system works, but he won't be surprised if eliminating the right to strike becomes an issue in the next election.

"You can't be in a rush to get out on the pavement. It should be the last call," he said. "The process works, but what happens if you get to the end of it and it is still not working?"

Harrison agreed with Barker that as long as the funding is controlled by the province, negotiating with local boards will remain a problem.

"The next step may well be provincial bargaining," he



KAREN BARKER
Likely be more labour disputes in York Region

Season's Greetings and best wishes for a prosperous New Year! Happy Holidays and all the best for a happy, healthy New Year!

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