

POOL COMPLEX: Residents gather in teams to hear more about \$5-million project

Pool has resident support: Sherban

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shots that have occurred at past meetings. "I thought tonight was a positive step forward," resident Steve Kerley said.

"Up until now there had been a few nights where it was like a lion's den with shouting matches. There was some good dialogue, people were listening to some other perspectives."

Kerley also thought a series of schematic drawings, showing the exact layout of the project, were helpful.

"For the first time you can visualize how it's going to be."

But many, including residents living on streets immediately north of the site, felt answers they were given were far from complete.

"There were no definite answers to our questions, or to those of others that we could see," said Wendy Cain of O'Brien Avenue.

Cain, and her husband Ron, said they're not satisfied council has fully considered issues relating to access to the complex and the infrastructure surrounding it.

"We wanted to know things like how long will it be until additional access is developed," but weren't given definite answers, Cain said.

Fred Robbins wanted to know when Hoover Park Drive, a bypass link connecting the site that is to run from Ninth Line to 10th to Line, was to be constructed.

"The answer I was hearing is sometime in the future," Robbins said.

"Why not wait until the streets

are in before going ahead," he suggested.

Like many present, Robbins said he wasn't opposed to the building of a pool, but felt the library should remain where it is.

"I'm all for a pool to be built in the next year or so, but why not on Ninth Line or somewhere where there is better access?"

Others got answers, but were not pleased by what they heard. Sheila McLeod said while her questions regarding the future esthetic integrity of the library site were answered, she didn't necessarily like what she heard.

"They answered my questions," said McLeod, a retired library employee, "but I still won't be happy to see the library leave Main Street."

Steve Sword was disappointed to learn the town's projection of a 10 per cent savings for combining the pool and library applied only to the operational costs.

"These savings aren't on costs related to the services being offered," said Sword.

Business owners fear drop-in traffic will disappear if the library leaves its Main Street location.

"Small business is hurting," said Karakolis. "This will hurt it even more."

Stouffville BIA chairperson Eric Button offered his own solution to the problem, suggesting the town attempt to have a beer or liquor store set up on the site to draw traffic.

Results of a survey, filled out by residents opposing the plan, were used by some residents in an

attempt to dissuade councillors. But politicians questioned the clarity of the questions asked in the poll.

"People in my riding aren't coming up to me and saying 'Don't build it'," Ward 6 Councillor Sue Sherban said.

"I'm confident there's more support than people who are against it."

Sherban suggested some who are in favour wouldn't come to council to express their views out of fear of being shouted down.

Ward 6 resident Chris Larkin agreed, suggesting he's gone from being lukewarm about the idea to embracing it.

"I started out indifferent to the project, but the more I look at it, the more I think it's a good idea," he said. Larkin suggested there are pros and cons to any new project undertaken in a town. "But in this case I think the advantages outweigh the disadvantages."

Mayor Wayne Emmerson — who insisted the project will not result in a tax hike — said the meeting helped those who were trying to sift through the facts.

"If residents wanted to learn the true facts, they got them," he said.

Ward 5 Councillor Judy Scala said the people she talked to came to listen. "Some came in negative and went away positive," Scala said.

Sherban and Ward 4 Councillor Cliff Dunkeld said other than traffic concerns, they weren't faced with many negatives at the meeting. "I will ask council to look at a traffic study," Sherban said.

Ward 1 Councillor Steve Plakes



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Mayor Wayne Emmerson points to the site of the proposed \$5-million library/pool complex as Ward 3 Councillor Peter Dobrich looks on. More than 100 people turned out Tuesday to hear more about the project.

said opposition to the south park facility is aimed more at council's willingness to move on the issue than at the complex itself.

"They're not really against the project. It's a slam against council

trying to put things forward."

He said most town residents are ready to proceed with council's pool/library concept.

"The project will go. I think people have made up their minds."

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