

PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS: Local MPPs in cabinet, including law enforcement chief

Crime crackdown vowed

BY MIKE ADLER AND CHRISTOPHER DOURIS
Staff Writers

Dave Tsubouchi, a lawyer and former municipal councillor, is Ontario's new chief of law enforcement.

The re-elected Tory MPP for Markham was named solicitor general for the province on Thursday, a senior cabinet post he said was his first choice in the second Mike Harris government.

"More challenges, to tell the truth," Tsubouchi said, when asked why he sought the job of top cop.

After three years as the Consumer Affairs minister, he added, "I think it's time to move on and try other things."

While he's at his new post, Tsubouchi said, Ontario will be pushing Ottawa to reform the Young Offenders Act, oppose the federal use of quotas for early jail release and provide more assistance to victims of crime.

Tsubouchi said he wasn't prepared yet to talk about how the Harris government will crack down on aggressive panhandling or street youth with squeegees — controversial election promises made by the Tories.

He will be joined in cabinet by returning York Region colleagues Al Palladini (Vaughan-King-Aurora), who stays on as minister of economic development and trade and Frank Klees (Oak Ridges), chosen as deputy house leader and chief government whip.

Tsubouchi said he was happy to see three cabinet positions awarded to the region's five MPPs.

He added he was disappointed there was no post for a fellow Tory veteran, Julia Munro (York North).

While the provincial legislature won't resume sitting until September, York Region's three cabinet ministers still



FRANK KLEES
Named Tory party whip in cabinet shuffle

have their work cut out for them this summer.

The last thing the summer is going to be is rest and relaxation," Klees said. "We're going to be preparing for a full fall agenda."

Even with the legislature on summer break, the cabinet will continue to meet, he added.

As party whip, Klees will be responsible for ensuring Tory MPPs attend the legislature to conduct daily business and are present for votes.

As deputy house leader he will work with Norm Sterling, minister of intergovernmental affairs and house leader and negotiate with the opposition house leaders.

"I'm looking forward to it, it gives me another dimension. There's going to be a learning curve," said Klees, adding that

keeping the MPPs in line is going to be challenging.

"There's some very strong-willed people there."

The main order of business for the coming session, he said, is implementing the legislation to keep the promises of what was essentially a jobs and growth campaign platform.

There are also constituency offices to re-organize, Klees said, with his slated to open in the next week to 10 days.

The premier has also given Palladini the task of implementing the 21 recommendations made by the Ontario Jobs and Investment Board "to make sure the economy stays on track."

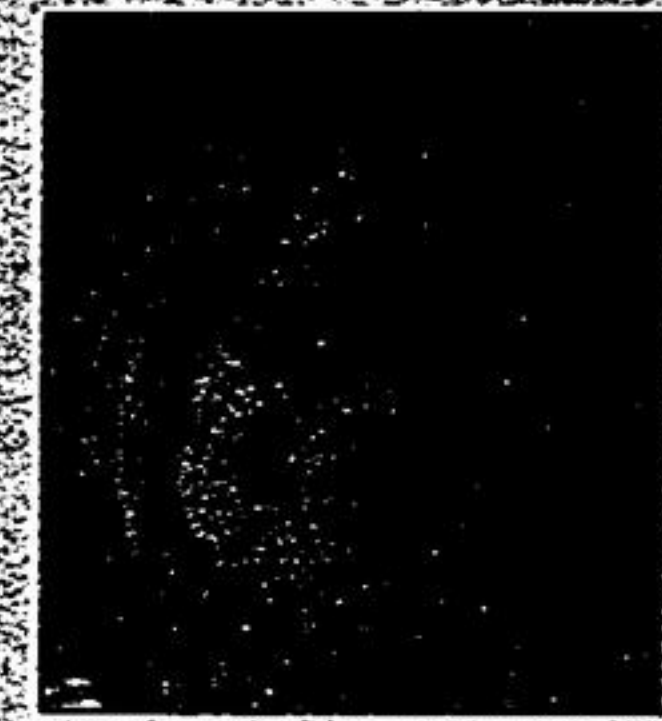
One of Palladini's responsibilities will be to ensure Ontario has a strong infrastructure, Leduc said. As a former transportation minister, Palladini knows first-hand the importance of that infrastructure.

The summer break will give Palladini the opportunity to spend more time in the constituency, to get to know the new part of the riding.

Palladini caused a minor sensation earlier in the week when he joked that "it pays to suck up to your boss, especially two days before a cabinet shuffle."

Klees, who had not heard about it said, "It had to be out of context."

He added the appointment of former speaker Chris Stockwell as labour minister was proof you didn't have to brown-nose your way into cabinet.



Joan Ransberry

Two fund-raisers will spell disaster for both

After Stouffville gives its collective head a shake, it's going to need deep pockets.

Less than six months after a committee launched a \$600,000 fund-raising campaign to help build a new library, another group kicked off a major fund-raiser for the soon-to-be-built indoor swimming pool.

While the 32,000-square-foot library and pool will be twinned under one roof, the fund-raising groups didn't get together and agree to work as one.

While making one pitch for one facility makes sense to me, it isn't in the cards.

I don't care how you cut it: At this time, the twin projects do not have the blessing of the people.

Still, the pool and the library complex will be built at South Park near O'Brien Avenue.

At some point, the complex may be viewed as the most wonderful thing, but that time is not now.

Even the name of the park is a problem. South Park reminds us of the foul-mouthed characters which appear in a television cartoon aimed at adults, but revered by children.

When Stouffville politicians agreed to relocate the library from near Main Street to South Park, library board chairperson Jan Williams expressed a serious concern that the move would jeopardize the fund-raising endeavour since such a high percentage of people wanted the library to remain where it is.

Despite Williams' very real problem, council didn't waver. The library board's fund-raising committee had little option but to soldier on, knowing they'd hit one road block after another.

DIFFICULT TO SELL

Both fund-raising campaigns will be difficult to sell. Launching two major campaigns in a community as small as Whitchurch-Stouffville could spell failure for both.

Many people came away from the recent council proceedings held to deal with this project with hurt feelings. How will they respond when asked to make a financial donation to either the pool or the library?

As well, businesses usually shy away from controversy, viewing such situations as being poor for business.

Regardless of how I view the situation, the pool part of the facility has been officially declared the town's millennium project, paving the way for the town to go hat in hand to the federal government for some funding. We will likely get it because the federal government doesn't care if a town is divided among its people.

Architect MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects is already working on the plan for the \$5-million indoor pool and library.

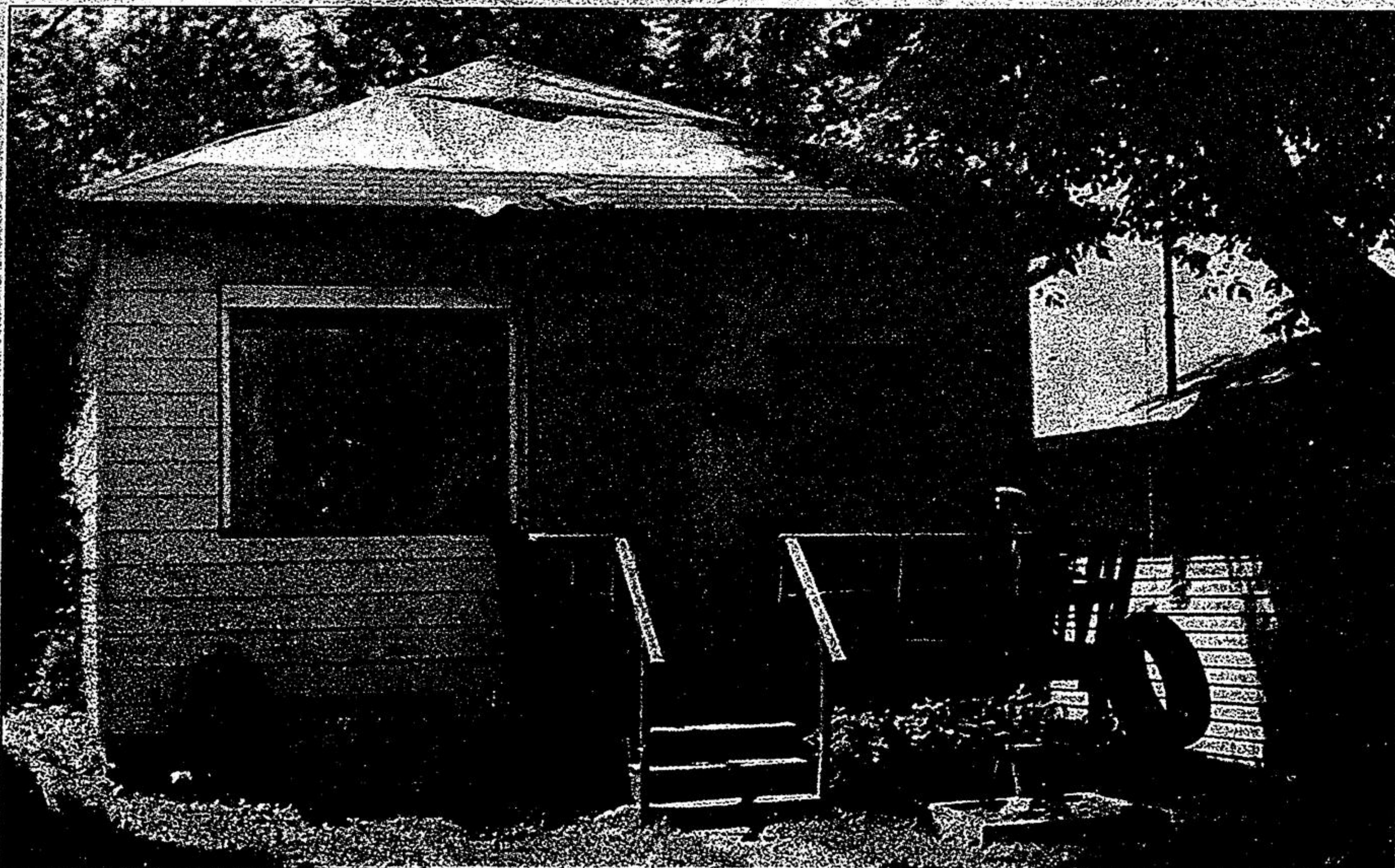
The firm is expected to be out in full force outlining what's in store for Whitchurch-Stouffville.

We know this much: The pool will be a leisure pool made up of four lanes; it will not be large enough for competitive swim meets, and it will include a water slide.

If all goes as planned, construction is expected to get under way this fall, while the twin complex is slated to open in the fall of next year. Still, I predict that both fund-raisers will fall shy of their goals.

And that's a real shame.

SINGLE MOM LOSES HOME, BELONGINGS



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

This Windsor Drive home in Musselman's Lake was destroyed by fire last Thursday night. Damage is pegged at \$85,000. The house was fully engulfed in flames by the time firefighters arrived. A pot left on the stove is the suspected cause.

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