

# To pave or protect: it's up to province

OMB to make decision on moraine development

BY MIKE ADLER  
Staff Writer

The power to shape the Oak Ridges Moraine in York Region seems to now depend entirely on decisions by the Ontario Municipal Board.

Richmond Hill, facing an OMB hearing that would decide the fate of its remaining rural land, made good this week on a threat to withdraw its proposed plan for the area, an amendment that would see some areas of the moraine paved and others protected.

"I don't know if it's dead, but it's certainly on life support, at best," Mayor Bill Bell said.

Withdrawing its plan, with special environmental standards the OMB already labelled unfair to developers, leaves the board with the power to approve all developments proposed for the area, or none.

In neighbouring King Township, hopes of appealing last week's OMB ruling on growth in King City faded, even as about 80 opponents of the decision, gathered Thursday, called the board an "unelected travesty" and a pro-development institution.

Residents were warned, however, that launching an appeal would be expensive and difficult. One woman noted the citizens' groups opposing the York-Durham sewer extension to King at the hearing must raise \$35,000 for legal costs.

Instead, many resolved to do whatever they can, even pray, to force the province to protect the moraine.

"Anything that might work, try it," Liberal MPP Mike Colle urged the crowd at King City Community Centre, saying it should not be up to the OMB or King to determine the moraine's future. "This is the job of the provincial government."

Several recommended putting pressure on Ontario Premier Mike Harris or MPP Al Palladini, who represents Vaughan-King-Aurora.

Before withdrawing its plan to urbanize the moraine, Richmond Hill issued an ultimatum to the province, which had suggested the town study its groundwater and preserve a 600-metre-wide natural corridor on the moraine. It asked for enough money to do both, giving the province three weeks to deliver it.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

At left, Christine Laflame of Vandorf is the designer of the proposed motif for the railway bridge at the south end of town.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

At right, the railway bridge across Woodbine Avenue in Vandorf will undergo a beautification project.

## Volunteers help beautify rural landscape

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Vandorf", explained local association president Frank Martino.

Vandorf residents are about to receive an information flyer outlining details of the project.

The hamlet's 600 residents are

being asked to volunteer their time and expertise. Volunteers could lend a hand landscaping and painting, said Martino.

Financial donations are also being accepted.

Martino expects a fair amount of community support for the mil-

lennium project.

"It is attracting attention and is considered to be a worthwhile project," said Martino.

"It's a way of accentuating the unique characteristics of the hamlet and beautifying our rural landscape," he said.

## March break in Whitchurch-Stouffville



Elise Paul, 8, gets help stepping into a pair of swim trunks from Lions Club of Stouffville's Ivan Harris and Helene Johnson to get in the spirit of Fun in the Sun at the library.

The club donated \$1,000 to help fund the March break programs.



Stouffville's Mark Weygang, 7, volunteered for the dry ice experiment, in which the solution was poured over his head by Gasoline the Mad Scientist, who performed at Markham Museum.



Brook Dodds, 9, threads wire as she makes a miniature band hatbox during craft time at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum.

STAFF PHOTOS/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

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