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## Humane society set to hear residents' concerns

BY JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Writer

Concerns linked to a plan to build a large animal shelter will be aired Wednesday.

Town staff, Woodbine Avenue residents and officials with the Ontario Society of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) will come together for

a meeting March 29 at 6 p.m. in the Whitchurch-Stouffville council chambers on Sandford Drive.

The OSPCA wants to build its provincial headquarters on a 40-acre site at 16532 Woodbine Ave.

Last week, residents convinced local council to delay making a decision on the application for at least two weeks. Council will review it once again on April 4.

Residents told council they were worried that diseased animals might find their way to the shelter and then be released into the wild, posing a public health threat.

A veterinarian warned council that if the proper precautions aren't exercised, the area could get hit with an outbreak of rabies. Others expressed concern about traffic and the effect it will have on the area's water supply.

The OSPCA's plan includes an animal care centre, a veterinary clinic, a wildlife centre, a livestock barn and a public trail.

If council gives the green light, the property will house the 15,000-square-foot provincial office, complete with 40 staff members. Also planned is a dog training area, a cat store, a dog store, a pet supply store, a pet daycare centre, a library resource centre, a multi-purpose room for community events, education programs, including violence prevention initiatives, community services and fundraising.

The Stouffville operation will oversee 25 OSPCA branches, while also being involved with its 34 affiliates.

The provincial agency provides protection and care to thousands of animals across the province.

The agency helps animals by investigating cases of cruelty and neglect. About 300 trained OSPCA investigators respond to thousands of cruelty complaints every year.

One of the OSPCA's most important functions is providing temporary shelter to stray and lost, neglected and unwanted pets.

OSPCA officials promised council they'd meet with the concerned residents.

### THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF YORK PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS HOSPITAL FUNDING

On March 9, 2000 York Region Council adopted the recommendation of its Finance and Administration Committee to approve in principle a plan to contribute to the five year, \$202 million capital improvement needs of York County, York Central and Markham-Stouffville Hospitals. The plan calls for the Region to contribute an amount equal to 50% of the Province's contribution to the hospitals.

It is expected that the Region's share will total \$62.5 million of the \$202 million over the next two to five years. The Region proposes to fund \$42.7 million (67%) from the tax levy and \$20.8 million (33%) from new residential development. The Province has committed \$124.8 million to the costs and the hospitals themselves will still be expected to fund raise the remaining \$8.5 million.

The purpose of the public meeting will be to hear reactions from the public on the plan to provide this funding to York Region's hospitals. Interested individuals or groups are invited to provide comments to Regional Council on Thursday, April 13, 2000 at 9:30 a.m. at York Region's Administrative Centre at 17250 Yonge Street, Newmarket.

Copies of the report can be obtained from the Office of the Regional Clerk at the address below. The Committee also welcomes written comments on the subject of hospital funding. Please direct your written comments to:

Denis Kelly  
Regional Clerk  
Region of York  
17250 Yonge Street  
Newmarket ON  
L3Y 6Z1  
Phone: (905) 895-1231  
Fax: (905) 895-3031

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