

WATER SUPPLY PROMPTS COMMUNITY CONTROVERSY

Developers should pay for system, residents argue

From page 1.

Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson is confident the town would win. "I think we'd do fine," he said.

Four separate developers want to collectively build four subdivisions, totaling 118 lots, to bring the population of Bloomington to about 625 from its current 250.

Proposed development includes a major 50-bed expansion to the Green Gables Nursing Home. However, being able to deliver much needed special care beds to the community hinges on a communal water system being built by 2001.

If town water does make its way to Bloomington, don't expect a free flow, local council was quickly told.

I can't see any reason to pay for something I neither want nor need. We should be given the chance to opt out of this. Well planned development is very good, but don't make me pay for it.

The proposed subdivisions are all slated for the Ninth Line in the Bloomington area. If council is eventually forced to accept staff's recommendations, existing residents will pay, on average, between \$1,500 and \$2,000.

As well, under the deal, there's additional costs, including \$769 for the watermain crossing and a \$500 service connection fee.

Most of the Bloomington properties are smaller historical lots with under 100-foot frontage, said McNeely.

Once hooked up, their private wells will be put out of commission and Bloomington residents would then join much of Stouffville in paying for individual water use on a monthly basis.

For those with properties exceeding 100-foot frontage, the cost would likely be higher, Parry said.

Lisa Gammage of Bloomington wonders how it will affect her family.

The frontage on Gammage's country property measures about 1,000 feet.

"How much is it going to cost us," Gammage asked. No one answered her question.

This plan is somewhat similar to the one adopted two years ago in Musselman's Lake and Ballantrae where, through a local improvement initiative, 830



WAYNE EMMERSON: Mayor says provincial intervention affected a similar situation in 1997.

property owners involuntarily helped pay for an \$8-million communal water system. It cost each homeowner about \$3,000 and once the system was in place, most went along with the mandatory call to cap their old wells.

There's a marked difference between the situation in Bloomington and Musselman's Lake and area. Ward 2 Councillor Mark Carroll stressed. Health risks prompted switching from private wells to a communal system, while in Bloomington, it's to accommodate growth, Carroll pointed out.

Carroll is adamantly opposed to the costing segment of the proposed Bloomington water plan. He told council he backed the Musselman's Lake water system and joined his neighbours to pay his share because it was demonstrated there was a real potential for a health scare. In the case of Bloomington, it's solely to benefit the developers, Carroll stressed.

"I am very cynical about this. I am upset," he said.

Emotions ran high throughout the meeting. Residents made it clear they do not want to be called upon to finance the project.

"I don't see any reason to pay for something I neither want nor need," said Gerry Tyman. "We should be given the chance to opt out of this. Well planned development is very good, but don't make me pay for it."

It isn't broken, don't fix it approach, Bloomington resident Tom Sharp pointed out.

He told council the wells in Bloomington are in fine shape.

"I see no reason for me to spend between \$1,500 and \$2,000 for something I don't need," said Sharp.

Bob Lewis pleaded with local

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council to stick to the 1989 agreement that called on developers to cover 100 per cent of the cost of bringing communal water to Bloomington.

Emmerson pointed out, in 1997, the province intervened, putting legislation in place that let the developers off the hook to pay all related service costs.

Expecting the residents to pay is unfair, said Bob Lewis.

"I cannot accept this. Where's the rationale? In the case of Ballantrae and Musselman's Lake, this is an apples and oranges situation. It doesn't compare," he said.

Musselman's Lake resident Bob James told council he wants to be compensated if Bloomington residents are exempted from paying a share of the water system.

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"I want the developers to pay me back," said James.

John McPhee is content with the state of his private well. McPhee told council he visits friends in downtown Stouffville where the "water tastes awful".

Developers will sell and make a profit, while homeowners will not reap any rewards, said Bob Wood.

"They're going to sell for profit, but look at us," he said.

In the first proposed subdivision, Fisco Lt. wants to build 21 homes on lots measuring between one and 1-1/2 acres.

Developer Popovich Inc. plans to build 22 homes on lots that range from just under an acre to just over an acre in size.

Peregrin York has applied to build 29 houses on lots that range from one to nearly four acres each.

Regardless of who pays, the water distribution system for Bloomington will include the following components: a 12-inch trunk watermain from the water tower on the Ninth Line southerly to the Fisco subdivision by the Region of York; a 12-inch local trunk watermain on the Ninth Line from the Fisco subdivision to the south end of Bloomington Community; a similar watermain on Bloomington from the Ninth Line to the new development; as well as local distribution mains on Bloomington Road; west of the Ninth Line, Thornbay, Castle Gate and Knights Place.

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COURTNEY NIVEN joins The Toronto Raptors Game Operations Department as COORDINATOR/CHOREOGRAPHER, DANCE PAK. Courtney has been a dancer with the Pak for the last two years and last season, in addition to dancing at most games, she also choreographed a very well received half time show. She has been a choreographer/dance teacher at KICKS Dance Studio in Markham since 1993 and in 1998 won a Silver Medal at the World Cup Tap Dancing Championships, held in Germany. Last year she was chosen to choreograph a 30 minute dance piece for the NHL FANTASY event, held in conjunction with NHL ALL STAR 2000.

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For application forms or more information, please call (905) 727-0022 or (416) 969-7179, Ext. 2242 or 2409.

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