

Trucks a problem here, too: Emmerson

BY PATRICK CASEY
Staff Writer

York Region will take yet another look at banning trucks off some regional roads.

Three weeks after York Region chairperson Bill Fisch told homeowners living near regional roads to get use to the noise and high traffic volumes, council has asked the region's transportation committee to identify a series of alternate routes heavy commercial trucks can use in high density residential neighbourhoods.

Last week, council refused to support a committee report recommending truck restrictions not be implemented on Langstaff

Road between Hwy. 7 and Dufferin Street in Vaughan and Richmond Hill's Elgin Mills Road between Yonge and Bathurst streets.

And they also endorsed a truck ban on Markham's Ninth Line between Hwy. 7 and Sixteenth Avenue, a two-lane stretch of road Markham Regional Councillor Gord Landon has long lobbied to get approved. But that decision angered several councillors, including Vaughan Mayor Lorna Jackson, who said it sends a dangerous precedent that some regional roads are not built to allow all traffic.

And Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson said his

community has its own share of traffic thanks to a host of gravel pits throughout the township.

"Let's be honest, it's not just one small section. Piecemealing it with one here and one there means we will only get hit by our residents," warned Emmerson. "It needs to be looked at where all these trucks are coming from."

"You people need our aggregate but I have to work with them: The Ninth Line south of Stouffville Road is very narrow and I'm disappointed the report didn't discuss all of the Ninth Line."

Both Jackson and Richmond Hill Mayor Bill Bell said if alternative routes are available for truck

traffic, local municipalities should assume responsibility for the existing roadways.

"It wasn't that long ago that the region was told they had to take over the Ninth Line. (Markham) wanted it to be a regional road and now they don't want it to be a regional road," Bell said. "Maybe the costs of the improvements to the Ninth Line should go back to the Town of Markham."

The region has posted alternative truck route signs in Newmarket and the east-west corridor through Whitchurch-Stouffville, providing guidance for drivers around sensitive areas — but the routes are not enforceable.

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