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Suspect bolts on Main Street

York Regional Police were hunting a suspect wanted for trafficking drugs in downtown Stouffville Wednesday afternoon after an officer happened upon a deal going down.

Const. Steve Morrell said the officer came upon a man, known to police, on Albert Street near Main Street about noon.

The suspect appeared to be involved in a drug deal with another man who had driven up in a car. The officer interrupted the deal, and found evi-

dence the suspect was in possession of marijuana.

As the officer prepared to arrest the suspect, the suspect bolted, prompting a foot chase. Back-up and the canine unit were called, but as of press time, the man was still at large.

He's described as East Indian, six-foot-four-inches tall, wearing a black three-quarter length coat and blue jeans. Anyone with information is asked to call 905-881-1221, ext. 7500 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

Seniors could take over town hall

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

A move is on to turn Whitchurch-Stouffville's old town hall into a new senior citizens centre.

Yesterday, town officials and the executive of the municipally-owned Silver Jubilee Club met to discuss the feasibility of moving the 106-member club to the old town hall.

The meeting included a tour of the century-old building on Civic Avenue in the heart of downtown.

Shifting the seniors from their Main and Market streets location one block east to the old town hall has gained Mayor Wayne Emmerson's stamp of approval. "It would be a great place for seniors," Mayor Emmerson said.

ACCESS PROBLEMS

"The Silver Jubilee hall has access problems, especially in the winter months. The Main Street location is not very handy for seniors. There's a space problem. The seniors only have about 2,000 square feet at the Silver Jubilee to work with. The town hall has 3,200 square feet on the bottom floor. We could put in an elevator and the seniors could use the top floor, too.

"We could offer the seniors much more programming if they made the move. It's just a better spot all around. We could renovate. It would be a great place for the seniors," said the mayor.

Chief Administrative Officer

Nick Kristoffy was one of the town representatives on the tour of the old town hall. "Yes, the seniors are interested in the building," said Mr. Kristoffy. "They wanted to see it. They want more information. They will go now and discuss it further with their membership."

EXECUTIVE LIKES IT

It's being well very received by the executive of the Silver Jubilee Club, said executive member Job Barber. "We could use two or three dividers. We could have our euchre and our bingo and enough room for a large party. There's also plenty of room for a nice kitchen. It's a fine space. There's nearly twice as much room as we have now. But, I don't think we'd need the upstairs part," said Mr. Barber.

Moving to the old town hall will be put to a vote, involving the club membership later this month, said Mr. Barber. The Silver Jubilee has been at its present spot for more than 25 years, said Mr. Barber.

Club member Ruth Mitchell disagrees. Mrs. Mitchell is quite content with the Main Street facility. "I'm very happy here," she said. "I don't see any sense in spending taxpayers' money to fix up the old hall. We're fine where we are."

Last year, the executive of the Silver Jubilee expressed an interest in relocating across Main Street to the old public library when the library services moved

to new quarters in Stouffville Memorial Park. However, the Jubilee Club membership turned down the move.

Last month, negotiations for the old town hall between the town and a private firm, Arrowsmith Bell and Ditata Co., fell through.

Talks between the town and the firm had carried on all summer after the Stouffville company was picked from a group of five candidates to take over the Civic Avenue building, vacated as a municipal building when the town moved its offices to Sandiford Drive five years ago.

PLANS FELL THROUGH

The plan was to have the firm enter into a lease agreement with the town and share the cost of the building's restoration. The town was considering using the bottom floor as an arts and cultural centre, while the outdoor area, including the clock tower, was to be upgraded to be used as a community meeting place.

Restoring the old town hall will be costly, Mayor Emmerson stated last month. Taxpayers could be hit with a \$1.2 million bill to renovate and restore, the mayor said.

Meanwhile, plans to have the building designated a Heritage Building under the Ontario Heritage Act, continue. As well, local art and culture groups continue to show interest in the building.



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