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Cuts would hurt residents: Mayor

From page 1.

a total bill of \$3,422. This year's regional and education taxes have not been set.

For the past two years, municipal tax increases had stayed at 2.9 per cent. There was no increase for the five years before that.

Whitchurch-Stouffville has no influence on the assessed value of properties, which is set by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation. Councillor Clyde Smith noted assessments on some homes in Ward 3 have gone up by 30 to 45 per cent. Some of his constituents have told him, "I can't afford to live here anymore."

"While I understand every department wants to do the best possible job for their constituents, I have to go back to my constituents," he said. "A 12-per cent increase is not acceptable from a citizen's perspective."

MAYOR ISSUES STATEMENT

Mrs. Sherban disagreed. "While I continue to strive for a less than 12-per cent increase, as mayor, in good conscience, I find it difficult to introduce spending cuts that would impact upon life-safety issues for our residents and businesses and cut



CLYDE SMITH: Twelve-per cent tax increase too high, town councillor tells budget meeting.

services that support our children and seniors in order to achieve an arbitrary budget figure..." she said in a statement issued after the budget meeting.

"Whitchurch-Stouffville residents live here because of our quality of life and our small-town values."

For 2004, the operating budget showed a shortfall of \$918,000. Much of that was due to a large decrease in funds remaining from the sale of Whitchurch-Stouffville Hydro. About \$3.5 million of the hydro funds went

toward two major purchases last year: land for a new public works yard and parkland on Bethesda Road. That meant less interest income. The town also had to pay into OMERS, the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System, after a five-year hiatus.

As the municipality's population has grown, costs also increased for fire and emergency services, hydro, garbage collection and other services.

"I am here to represent our members who are concerned about the safety of their members and the public," said Jon Winters of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Professional Firefighters Association Local 4512. The department hopes to add at least seven full-time firefighters this year.

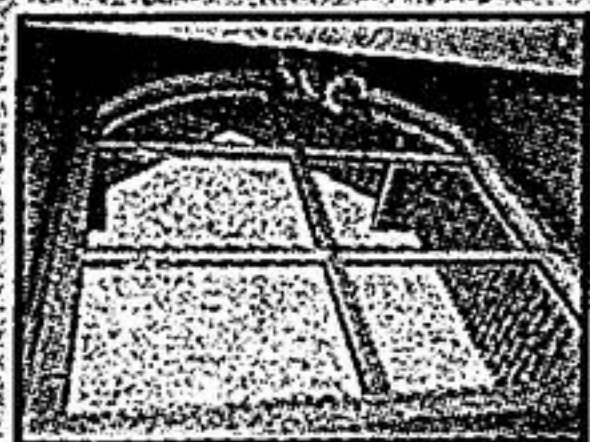
HOMES, FARMS DOMINATE

With 87.6 per cent of taxes coming from homes and farms, there is little prospect for greatly increased growth in income. The industrial tax base is 4 per cent while 8.4 per cent of tax money comes from commercial operations in town.

The budget, outlining several tax increase options, is scheduled to be brought back to council in early April.

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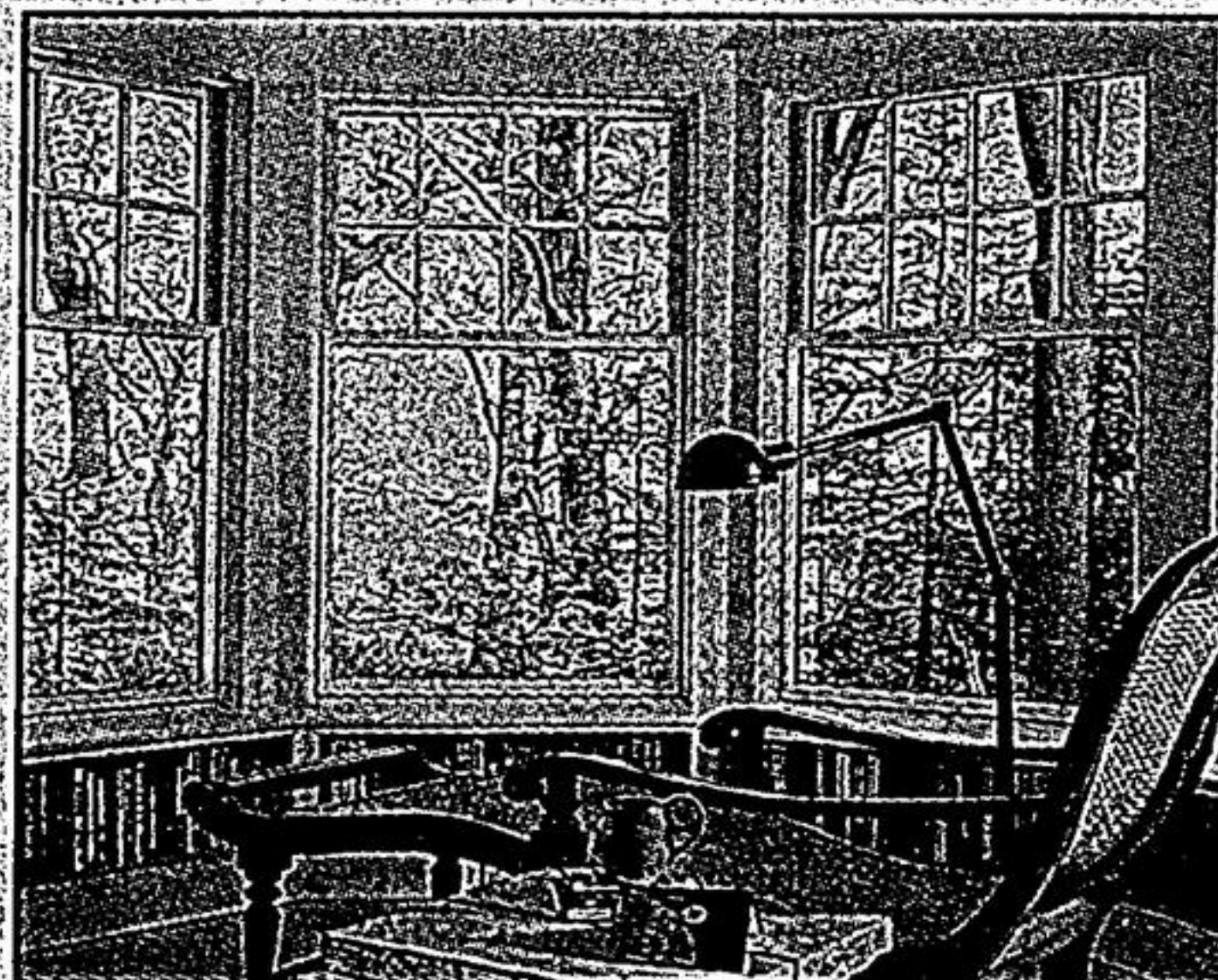
Fieldstone Windows Ltd. is owned and operated by Ken Simpson, a trim carpenter by trade who has more than 15 years' experience in the construction business. Unlike many door and window companies, Fieldstone hires only those carpenters who show his commitment to detail. Each installation is supervised in order to maintain consistent quality.

"It is possible to insert new door and windows into existing window frames, leaving interior mouldings intact," says Dave. "An alternative method is to remove the entire window back to the rough opening. This also gives a most impressive look."

By removing the entire window, customers are assured that the new window is sealed and insulated properly and that any old or rotting wood is removed. Larger glass area and upgraded mouldings are other added benefits.

Fieldstone Windows Ltd. specializes in professional residential window and door installations, and takes enormous pride in completing all work on time and on budget. "Whether it's a vinyl window or a solid wood door, there is a range of qualities from high-end to poor," says Ken. "We make quality a number one priority with all customers, which has resulted in many repeat and referral customers."

Some window dealers and manufacturers are limited to a single product line and may persuade homeowners to buy something they don't want or need. Since Fieldstone Windows



is not a manufacturer, it has the flexibility to offer a far greater range of products to suit the customers' style and budget.

"Windows are highly practical aspects of a home, but they serve another purpose as well," says Dave. "They are also design elements that can make or detract from a home's appearance. When choosing a window, it's important to not only select an efficient window, but one that complements the architecture as well."

Installing windows requires a high degree of skill and patience, and fieldstone Windows takes the time to do it right the first time. The correct shimming, fastening, insulating and finishing trim all contribute to an excellent window renovation.

With Spring almost here, now it is the perfect time to start planning a door or window installation. Call Ken or Dave at Fieldstone Windows Ltd. today for a competitive quote on your next project.

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