

# Battle over infill homes reaches municipal board

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Staff Writer

A fight to keep the character of new homes compatible with older established neighbourhoods has reached the Ontario Municipal Board.

A hearing was held on a proposal to redevelop a large lot at 128 Rose Ave., but a decision won't be made until a later date.

An older bungalow sits on what is now considered four lots on the Stouffville street.

The property, at the intersection with Lloyd Avenue, was bought more than a year ago by Brundale Fine Homes Ltd.

It built a narrow two-storey home there last sum-

mer with a garage jutting out front on the western part of the property.

When Brundale came to the town's committee of adjustment asking for a lot line on the property to be moved to create 41 and 69-foot lots, the request was denied.

The lot wouldn't be compatible with the rest of the established neighbourhood, the committee said.

That's when Brundale appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board. Whitchurch-Stouffville council decided the town would not participate in the Jan. 31 OMB hearing.

Residents Randy Mole and Bryan Millsip are among those worried creat-

ing one drastically smaller lot would pave the way for the developer to request five 40-foot lots.

The residents and Councillor Rob Hargrave want to see a municipal policy in place to make any new home construction in town compatible with adjacent established neighbourhoods.

"It will happen all over town, if we don't stop it here," Mr. Mole said.

"Preservation of older neighbourhoods is more valuable than their loss," he

added at a Jan. 25 council meeting.

"My client has no present intention to subdivide the property," Brundale lawyer Michael Melling said.

About 10 residents, Mayor Sue Sherban and at least three councillors attended the OMB hearing over the course of the day.

Mr. Mole and Jeanne Major represented the Rose Avenue neighbours.

A policy on in-filling, as it's called, is in the works as part of the town's reassessment of the Stouffville sec-

ondary plan, town planner Andrew McNeely explained. It could take several months for the policy to be ready.

Councillor Hargrave wanted an in-fill bylaw put into place immediately to set the standards for other such developments.

Council had asked for one from planning staff several months ago.

"If the application is refused by the OMB," Mr. Melling said, "there will be no (architectural) control over any of the houses built on that lot."

Another issue worrying residents in the area is whether some of the decades-old, lovingly-tended cedar hedges providing shade and privacy would be destroyed if a walkway recommended by the town was constructed.

Neighbour Heather McLean said she knew when her family bought a house in the area it was adjacent to land that could be developed, but "the beauty of this area and the hedges made this property what it is."

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