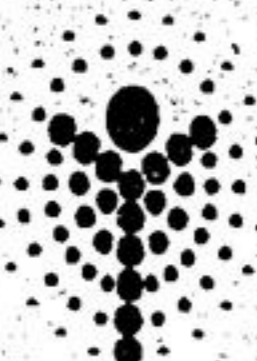


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Street name embarrasses some residents

Lahore vibrant city, but residents tired of off-colour jokes

'With all due respect to the Pakistani community, we understand it to be an inappropriate word.'

BY JOAN RANSBERRY Staff Writer

Alexandra Gavalas Lahore Road resident

Is it an offensive name? Some people in a new subdivision in southeast Markham think so. And they asked council to do something about Lahore Road.

Some residents in the 14th Avenue and Markham Road area claim the name sounds like a derogatory term for a prostitute. Others like it, pointing out it's the name of a city in Pakistan.

When picking a street name, the object is to reflect cultural diversity, Councillor Khalid Usman said.

"The name Lahore shows diversity," he said. When pronounced properly, the name Lahoré is not controversial, Mr. Usman added.

"If you don't know how to pronounce it, you should learn," he said.

"People laugh and make sarcastic remarks when they hear this street name," Anthony Fernandes told council members at Tuesday's meeting. The street should carry the name Cedarwood after a neighbourhood school, he suggested.

Markham is proud to be the most diverse community in Canada, Councillor Erin Shapero said, throwing her support behind the name.

When the builder sold the homes, it listed the address as Bethany Street. However, staff pointed out Bethany was not the registered name. Still, some residents suggested the town go with that name.

The name Lahore has a historic significance, Javed Akbar told council, noting "Lahore is a vibrant city in South Asia."

About 20 residents of the new street who attended the meeting were evenly split on the issue. The street has 24 houses.

It's disturbing to see this much controversy coming from a street name, Councillor Joe Virgilio said. "I feel uneasy that there are this number of people who don't want the name," he said. "I'd like us to take a second look at it."

Council delayed a decision, asking staff to review it further.

"I've grown frustrated by the name Lahore," Alexandra Gavalas said. "It doesn't sound very appropriate to say. People find it humorous. With all due respect to the Pakistani community, we

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