



DON BARKER: Ferret rescue expert running for mayor of Whitchurch-Stouffville in Nov. 13 election.

Ferrets, candidates appreciate park

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

Memorial Park is in the hearts of all candidates running for election Nov. 13.

All the candidates want to preserve and enhance the park, which many called a "jewel" and a "gem", at an all-candidates meeting Thursday.

Mayoral candidate Don Barker may have summed it up most colourfully.

"I enjoy the park. My ferrets need the park. They really enjoy walking in the park."

But the park, that is an oasis in the centre of town, is in trouble.

"Its trees are full of carpenter ants. The river needs to be cleaned out. We have neglected that park for too many years," Mr. Barker, who rescues ferrets abandoned as pets, said.

Candidates want to ensure that future generations of children and adults can play by the creek, reach for the sky on the swings, play baseball and take part in events such as Strawberry Festival, lawn bowling, tennis, concerts, movies and more.

'Any council that destroys that park would be committing electoral suicide.'

Pamela Courtot
mayoral candidate

What goes into the park will be determined by local residents, Mayor Sue Sherban said. There have already been two public meetings, with more to come. Fred Robbins, who is running in Ward 1, wants to see a strong tree bylaw in place, that will protect trees both in town and in rural areas.

Councillor Rob Hargrave is strongly opposed to a road running smack dab through Memorial Park, which lies in his ward. He's the incumbent in Ward 6, running against Elizabeth Tracey. He was one of the councillors who voted to hold off on making a decision on the road, a few months ago, until another public meeting can be set up with residents.

The park will have support, since "any council that destroys that park would be committing electoral suicide," mayoral candidate Pamela Courtot said.

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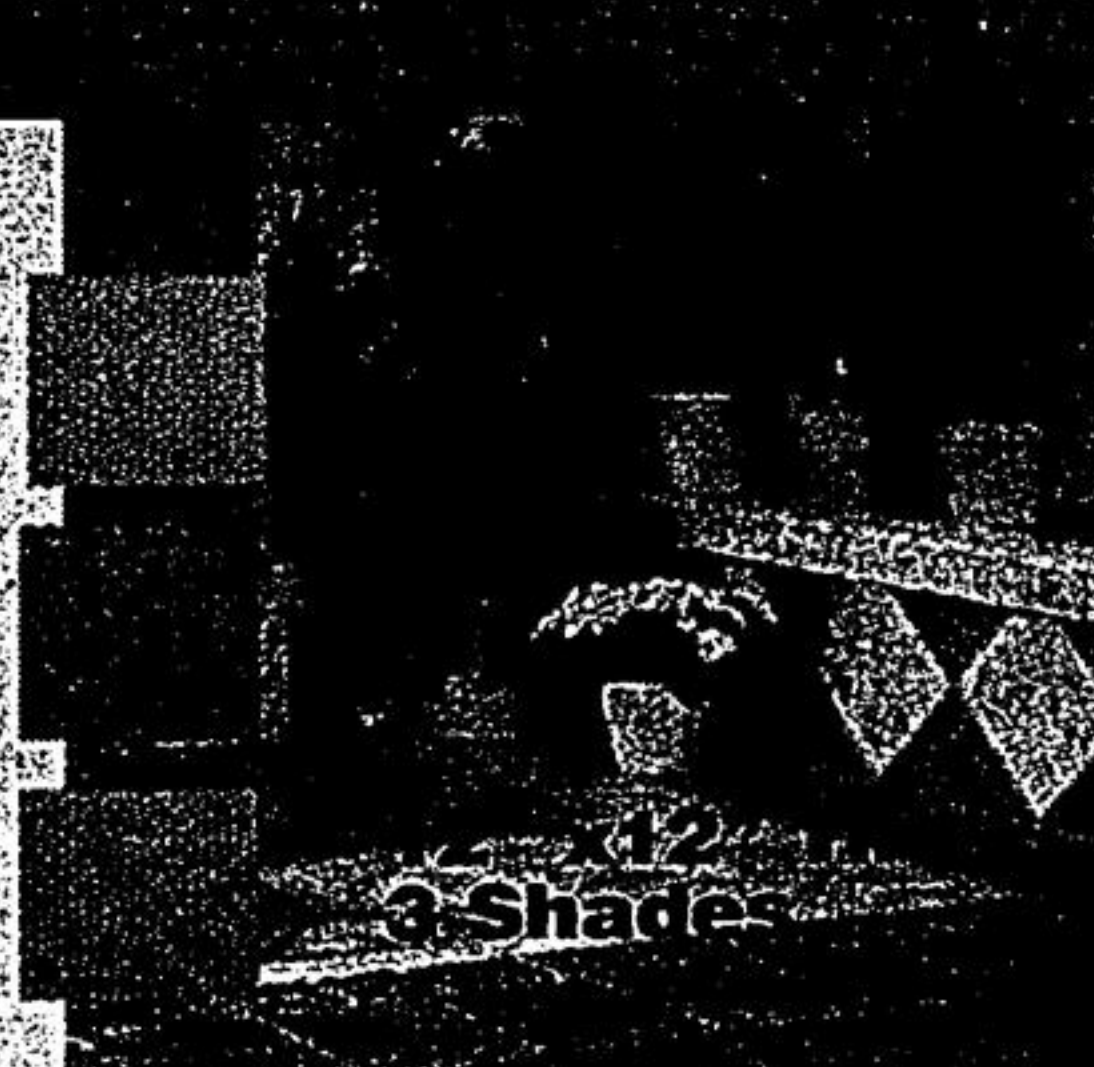
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