

# OPINION

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**

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## Editorial

### Arts centres, arena on the horizon?

It's a building boom coming to Whitchurch-Stouffville.

And not just the construction of hundreds of homes on the go in all quadrants of Stouffville.

Although the two are related.

The town is set to build or renovate several structures. Some are directly related to growth.

The old town hall, also known as 19 on the Park, is slated to become an arts centre. But it's not a done deal. Council is waiting for a design. It doesn't have a firm estimate of costs.

We support doing something with the building. It's too important a location and too significant a structure to have been left abandoned for too many years.

We do have questions about its use.

Two of the town's largest arts groups, York Durham Academy of Performing Arts and Music Mania, say the theatre in the centre will be too small to host their productions.

If the town is considering a larger theatre, could the facilities be rolled into one centre? Or should the old town hall be renovated into the home of new Latham Gallery, which is looking for more support from council, and other visual arts groups?

It's a shame a theatre in the new Stouffville District Secondary School wasn't given more consideration.

Stay tuned.

A new fire hall in Stouffville is long overdue. A location better than the east end of downtown, home of the current hall, is a must. Modern facilities and equipment must be purchased. A location has not been found, but the west side of Stouffville makes sense.

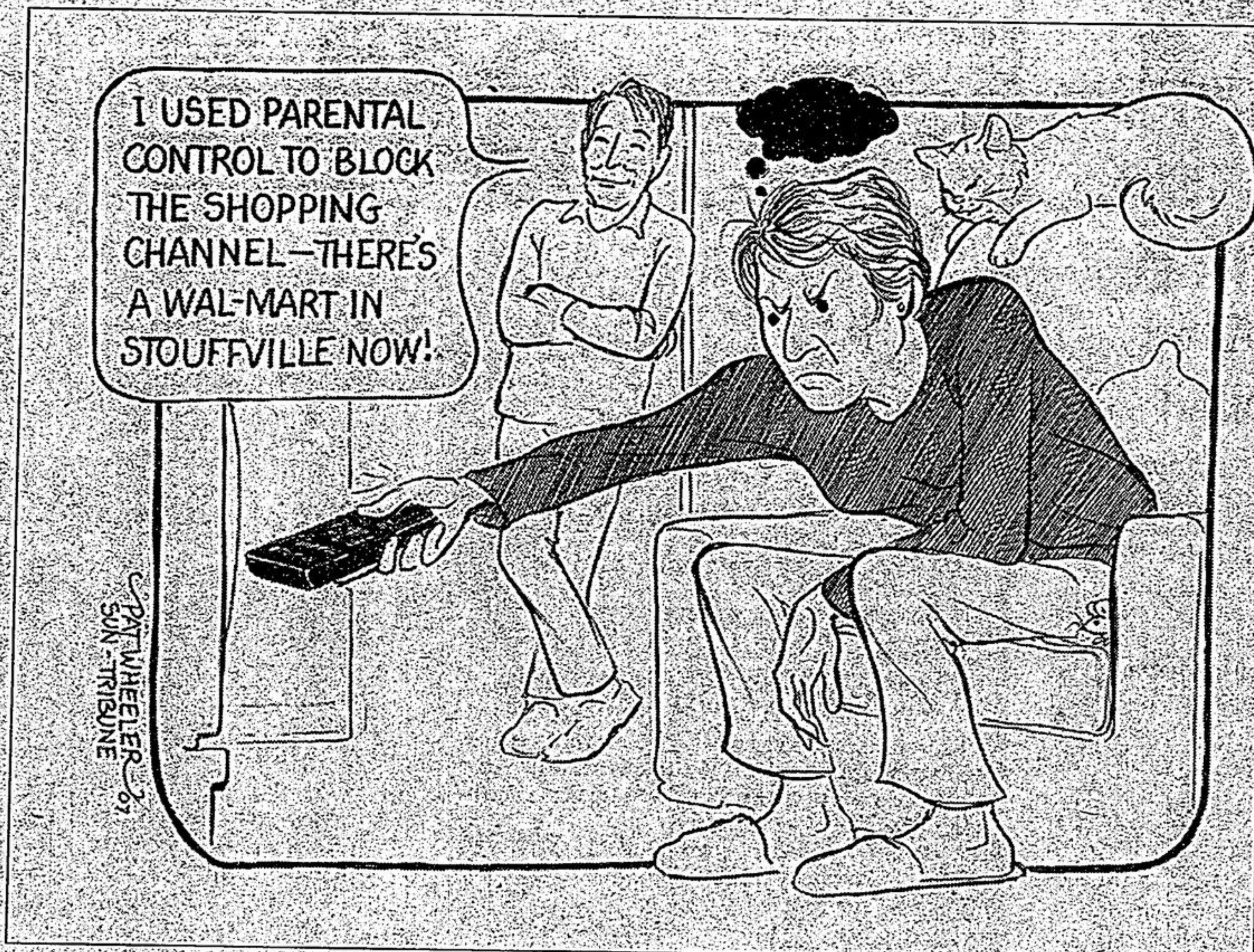
A new arena will be paid for with development fees. That's a given. The need has been demonstrated. Some children are being turned away from hockey due to a lack of ice time. That's wrong.

The town must accept that its 20-year-old Stouffville Arena no longer measures up to the needs of fans and participants. The main pad's crowded bleachers, ultra-cold temperatures and echoing sound system don't cut it in 2007, let alone 2017. A proper "showplace" for figure skating, hockey, trade shows and large-scale concerts is required, council.

The future of the old Stouffville Secondary remains undecided.

Hopefully, the town gets its hands on this gem of a property in the core of the community. The possibilities are endless, including a new home for the town offices, a new seniors centre, arena and theatre.

The skyline of your community is changing, Stouffville.



### Off The Top

with *Jim Mason*  
*Things you'll never hear at the rink*

Not to pick on hockey parents. Because, for the love of Don Cherry, we know they've taken more abuse than Tie Domi, before and after he retired.

And, in many cases, the quirks and quacks of rink life can be transferred to the soccer pitch, ball diamond and dance studio by overzealous moms and pops.

The difference with hockey is, because we invented it, we think we own the sport. Every child lacing them up has the right to play in big leagues.

"Hey, if Keith Acton and Brad May did it out of Stouffville, why not my kid?" Or so the thought process goes with some.

Which leads us to the list of things you'll never hear in a Canadian arena:

- "Gee, Madge, that arena diet is really doing things for you. I can't believe you look that fine, what with all the hotdogs, butter-soaked popcorn and pizza slices you've wolfed down. Forget about calling Jenny Craig, who wants fries, guys?"

- "You're right, honey, the coach did the right thing not playing our son during the last two periods. Our kid won't make those same boo-boos next time. It's too bad his grandparents drove two hours through a snow storm to see him take two shifts and a pair of penalties. I'd like to go into the dressing room and thank the coach, but there is that messy restraining order still in place."

- "God love the referee. I didn't realize how tough a job he had until I watched him today, what with my kid on the bench and all. They have to see the whole ice and there are 14 other bodies out there. They get yelled at by everyone. And they're trying their best. I'd tell him myself, but you know, restraining order."

- "The other team's parents seem like such a nice bunch. Let's go sit in their section and exchange pleasantries. Who cares if they're swearing like stevedores at our six-year-olds and that one man is making crude gestures in our direction?"

- The melton hockey jacket, tuque, and face painted in team colours doesn't work for everyone.

*Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.*

## Letters to the Editor

### Force businesses to clean up their act

Each day hundreds, if not thousands, of cars drive up and down Woodbine Avenue between Aurora and Vandorf roads.

During this short stretch, drivers will pass not one, not two, not three but four so-called businesses that have a variety of very used vehicles for sale, not to mention a large pile of hazardous used tires for which no one seems to be responsible.

Not only is this a big eyesore for the hamlet of Vandorf, but is anyone else concerned about the possible toxic leakage into our aquifer system as a result of these fermenting tires?

The used car businesses look more like scrapyards located about 10 feet off Woodbine for all to admire. If we're going to put taxpayers' money into improving things such as the museum and park itself in Vandorf, then surely we can force these "businesses" to clean up their act.

R. ADDUONO  
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

### Money better spent on real theatre

*Re: Council says yes to arts, culture centre, March 1.*

The design proposal/status report on the old town hall at 19 Civic Ave. given at council was well done. The sales pitch by the consultants was in keeping with most pitchmen. Round up to the nearest hundred thousand on the income estimates and round down on the expenses.

The decision to keep the second floor is a wise move that ensures the structural integrity of the outer walls. I would think the cost of creating what they called the "great hall", including seating, acoustics, lighting, sound and any number of

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peripheral requirements, represents a significant amount of money.

In addition, the structural integrity requirement to upgrade the load-carrying capacity would further increase the cost of creating the hall. The consultants upped the seating capacity from 120 to 140 printed in their handout to 125 to 145 or 150 in their verbal presentation.

They identified eight types of potential user groups, but I would challenge them to justify, and council's willingness to accept, the possibility of coming close to the estimated \$97,378 revenue in the first year. Councillors who may still be in office six years from now can expect to see much more than the municipal \$27,210 revenue contribution estimated by the consultants.

I think the overall proposal for the renovation to be a good one. I think it could be a real focal point in town. I agree it would blend in well with the proposed adjustments to Memorial Park.

But the proposal for a great hall is a mistake and not cost effective. Better that the money be spent planning and building or buying a proper theatre.

The old town hall can become a place to be proud of in the downtown core. I expect it will add a very small amount to our property tax.

BOB LEWIS  
BLOOMINGTON

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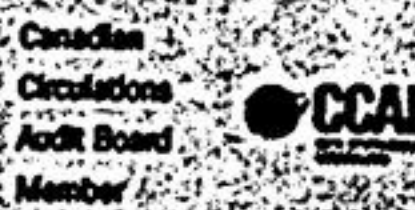
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