

# Tough tree rules part of proposal

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The unnecessary cutting of trees by developers has prompted one Whitchurch-Stouffville politician to call for a tree conservation and planting plan.

Another concern of Councillor Clyde Smith was public perception the town doesn't have adequate punishment for developers who cut down trees without authorization.

In 2005, Mr. Smith got an earful from residents in his rural ward after a developer took down a number of trees at Stouffville Road and Woodbine Avenue to make way for industrial and commercial development.

There were several incidents in Stouffville as well:

- In 2006, many trees were cut down unexpectedly to make way for a new auto-mall on Hwy. 48 south of Main Street;

- More than 60 trees were cut around Mostar Avenue, behind Novopharm, in August to make way for commercial and industrial units and;

- Last month, a developer trimmed large branches from trees on several residential properties backing onto his site, without permission.

Mr. Smith wants the town

to create a tree conservation and planting plan and do more enforcement.

Less trees often mean a less attractive community, Councillor Ken Ferdinands said at a council meeting.

He acknowledged the development community wants a clean slate when starting their development.

*"If developers have a compelling argument why these trees need to be cut, we should listen."*

"If there are small clumps of trees that aren't deemed significant, they want to get rid of them," he said.

He proposed a greening strategy and a relationship with developers, rather than a punitive approach.

"If developers have a compelling argument why these trees need to be cut, we should listen," Mr. Ferdinands said.

It is already stipulated in the official plan, Mr. Smith said, for the town and developers to work ahead of time to agree about what should happen to trees on properties being developed.



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