

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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Best towns offer something for all ages, planners say

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

They're the town's development guys.

They get excited about bridges, parks, homes and streets and the people who get to enjoy them.

Tom Parry, the town's director of development services and Andrew McNeely, manager of planning services, keep a close eye and a guiding hand on what's being built and developed.

The most effective communities, they say, offer something for all ages, from newborn to seniors.

The planners find themselves doing a lot of communicating with developers, residents and business owners who want to build up or change their premises. They're the first to hear, sometimes fairly loudly, about trees being cut down when they're not supposed to be or when houses are too high for their community.

Nevertheless, this is the best part of the job for the planners.

"We enjoy the communication with the residents and business community," Mr. McNeely said. "We want to work with the community to realize its full potential."

He finds their job has been made easier by responsive and progressive politicians.

The most successful commu-

See WELL-ROUNDED, page 2.

RIDE IN TO 2008



STAFF PHOTO/HANNELORE VOLPE

Mayor Wayne Emerson (left) and Blair Purcell of Lionel's Pony Farm visit with one of the horses that will provide horse-drawn sleigh rides at Memorial Park on New Year's Eve. The Mayor's New Year's Eve party starts at 6:30 p.m. Monday with fireworks at 8:45 p.m. There will also be hot chocolate and games at Latham Hall.

7.9% budget hike goes to council

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

While Whitchurch-Stouffville's 2008 draft budget shows an increase of 7.9 per cent, the figures won't be in until after final deliberations, which are set for Jan. 29.

If that increase does remain, however, it would mean a taxpayer with a house valued at \$330,000 would pay about \$70 more in municipal taxes per year.

Last year's draft budget also indicated a 7.9-per-cent increase. However, when the dust settled, it had been cut to 3.9 per cent.

The total amount of expenditures is set at approximately \$28 million.

The leisure services department takes 22 per cent of the \$28-million total, while public works is close behind at 19 per cent. Water and sewer takes 13 per cent, development services are at 12 per cent, while fire and emergency services require 11 per cent.

Capital projects, such as the new arena, which will have two ice pads, are fully funded by development charges, and not taxpayer money, Mayor Wayne Emmerson said at last Tuesday's council meeting. Many other projects in town are also funded to a large extent by development charges.

To keep up with a growing town, more staff have been added. There were 118 full-time permanent employees as of July 31. That's up from 107 in 2006 and 91 in 2005.

The budget meeting begins at 9 a.m. Jan. 29 in the council chambers, 37 Sandford Dr.

Comments are welcome and residents are welcome to attend the budget deliberations.

To read the 2008 draft budget online, visit townofws.com and click on the council meeting calendar, agendas and minutes section. From there go to council agendas, and choose appendix A to report 12 dated Dec. 18/07.

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