

Lake convenience store gets reprieve from developer

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

Musselman's Lake residents are worried their local convenience store could close, and they don't want to see that happen.

A developer is proposing to change the building he owns at 14635 Ninth Line into eight apartments, which could eventually jeopardize the existence of Sunny's One Stop Variety, the commercial

tenant in the building.

About 40 residents came to a public meeting Tuesday night in the town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's council chambers to voice their opposition.

Shortly before the meeting, the proponent modified his application in a letter to the town so the building could be turned into six apartments. Under this proposal, the variety store could remain. Its lease is up in around 2 1/2 years.

"We are losing a piece of our community," local resident Mark Carroll said at the public meeting.

People are worried, he said about what would happen to the site, if four more apartments come in and the store goes.

If the store were to close, people would have to travel out of their community for just a few items, adding to traffic volume. Mr. Carroll, a former town councillor, received a standing ovation from

the audience.

During the meeting, 28 people spoke to the issue.

Another resident, Warren Foster, believes the store is an essential part of the community. There has been a store in this location for more than 50 years, he said. In the early years, it was a small operation, open only in the summers for the cottagers who came up to the lake.

Mr. Foster feels that overcrowding of the building would result if

the changes were to go ahead. He said tenants might be transient, possibly leading to the property becoming rundown.

"I understand a community wants a local variety store," Councillor Phil Bannon noted. "The owner appeared to be sincere in his efforts to work with the community."

No decisions are made at public information. Comments will be incorporated into a report that will go to council.

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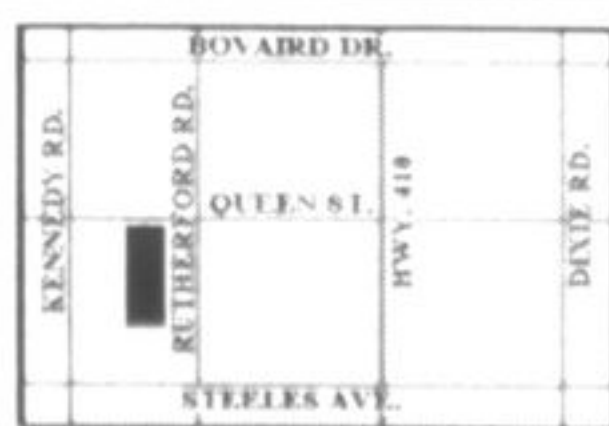
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