

OPINION

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

Rolling out a welcome mat

Main Street, at the western entrance to Stouffville, resembles a roadway through a Third World country. It's bumpy and unmarked and sure to rattle your vehicle.

Residents complain about noise, mud, dirt and construction traffic in their community.

Trees are cut, some illegally, rangling residents. It's understandable.

Welcome to a boom town.

Hundreds of homes have been built here during the last three years.

A new high school opened last year. Two new public elementary schools are under construction.

A shopping centre on Hwy. 48 is partially built. Another is soon to be constructed on Main Street next to Tim Hortons.

An auto mall with up to eight dealerships will be built during the next two years on Hwy. 48 north of Main.

The physical side of growth can be accounted for. We know there will be hiccups, just as there were in other growing communities right here in York Region.

Minimizing the effect on residents new and old, is key.

The social side of growth is another issue.

Are we doing enough to integrate newcomers into Whitchurch-Stouffville, many of whom are relatively new to Canada?

Do they know enough about this community? Maybe not.

A rough poll of residents who moved here approximately two years ago found they didn't know about established Stouffville entities such as the Music Mania variety show and the Stouffville Spirit. Jr. A Hockey Club.

Are they made to feel welcome?

We have a Welcome Wagon and a Newcomers Club. The municipality has hosted information fairs aimed at educating new residents about the organizations and facilities of their new home town.

More is planned, and needed.

The smart organizations are holding their own sessions for new residents.

They are open to new residents and new ideas.

Because, the surest way to shrink an organization is to remain stagnant, especially in a growing and changing town.

Welcome, newcomers. Please embrace this community, hopefully with the assistance of your neighbours.



Off The Top

with Jim Mason Got game? Not bowling, Stouffville

And isn't it ironic. Don't you think? In the very month many are celebrating plans to build one recreation centre in Whitchurch-Stouffville, another is preparing to be closed.

The new kid on the block would be a curling club that is still very much in the planning stages.

The old dog prepping to get the boot off Main Street is the Stouffville Bowling Centre.

So, we'll provide a new form of recreation for some and take it away from others?

Let's be clear on the bowling alley. It's a privately-owned facility and the owners are free to do with it what they please, within the rules of the municipality.

And you can't argue with the new use, a medical centre housing two to five doctors. If we aren't short on physicians yet, our day will likely come.

Just as curlers took their brooms to clubs in Uxbridge and Markham after rinks closed in Stouffville over the years, the same will likely happen with our bowlers.

Three hundred of them frequented the alleys of the Stouffville centre weekly, for league play, birthday parties and fundraising events.

It's another piece of old Stouffville disappearing, all six lanes.

Bowling alleys are going the way of movie theatres and shopping zones with new mega complexes now serving regions not villages.

And I don't like chances of a new set of lanes being put down in Stouffville, at least in the short run.

After all, a movie theatre has been talked about in pretty much every municipal election here since 1982 and nary a proposal has been made.

So, we widen our environmental footprint and drive our SUVs to the cinema, the mall and, now, the bowling alley, in neighboring communities, dropping our dollars as we go, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Got game? Not bowling.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

Letters to the Editor

Council has chance to create legacy with park, arena, bowling centre

Re: Medical centre to oust bowling alley and Bowling centre closure ends Stouffville tradition, letter to the editor by Kelly Lehman, March 22.

After reading the article and the letter, I see a need to have both facilities in the town.

As a possible solution to the problem, could the town not look to the unpopular Park Drive extension?

The project has now been divided into Phase 1 and Phase 2.

Phase 1 is to complete the connection from Reeves Way to the parking lot of the Lebovic Leisure Centre, which will allow residents to the south access to facility.

Is Phase 2 of the extension necessary now that Hoover Park Drive (and soon Millard Street) has been extended to Hwy. 48?

Phase 2 will be subject to budget allocation to rip out the softball diamonds, Burkholder Street and re-construct the park beginning in 2009.

If Phase 2 was not to happen could the money that is going to be allocated in the budget towards the unpopular Park Drive extension be reallocated to a new location for a bowling alley.

The 19 on the Park Theatre and a hockey arena that will meet the needs of tomorrow?

It is just an idea that brings together the requests already presented by the residents of this town for a long time.

Most politicians want to leave a legacy. Mayor Wayne Emmerson and councillors, why not leave your legacy as the council that preserved one of our oldest parks and helped residents achieve better access to health care, theatre and sporting facilities,

including a bowling alley, that help make our town unique.

MELANIE BURNETT
STOUFFVILLE

Old Canadian Tire building a cinema?

I am writing to express my idea for the building which housed our Canadian Tire on Main Street.

I know the southwest corner of Ninth Line and Main Street is scheduled for redevelopment into retail and commercial business and I don't have any issues with that area at all.

I have expressed my opinions in the past or at how we choose to develop and the need to adopt a "live, work and play" mentality when it comes to growth in this modern age of sustainable development.

One item the town is missing is a movie theatre. We have to commute to Markham or Aurora if we want to go out to a movie.

I think the old Canadian Tire is an ideal location for this entertainment venue as it is close to restaurants and within walking distance to old and new residential developments.

People could go out for dinner and then take in a movie as a night out.

I don't know if plans are already in place for this facility, but a movie theatre would be a nice addition complementing the live-work-play sustainable lifestyle.

It would help the economy of the town as well, keeping our recreational dollars here in Stouffville.

DEREK SAWYER
STOUFFVILLE

LETTERS POLICY

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A York Region Media Group community newspaper
The Sun-Tribune, published every Thursday and Saturday, is a division of the Metroland Media Group Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Forstar Corporation. Metroland is comprised of 100 community publications across Ontario. The York Region Newspaper Group includes The Liberal, serving Richmond Hill and Thornhill, Vaughan Citizen, The Era-Banner (Newmarket/Aurora), Markham Economist & Sun, Georgina Advocate, York Region Business Times, North of the City, yorkregion.com and York Region Printing.