



STAFF PHOTOS/SANDRA BOLAN

You can have this Ringwood building for free, but it will cost about \$400,000 to move it, plus the cost of land to put it on.

## No takers? Diner will be demolished

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wood area is preferred.

"It has been the gateway to Stouffville for the last 100 years," Mr. Beatty said. "The farther it moves away from that corner, it loses its context, value and importance."

However, if no one comes forward to retrieve the building, it will be demolished.

According to Mr. Beatty, despite the building's age — more than 150 years old — it is structurally sound. Significant modifications have been made to it, externally and internally. The building won't cost its new owner a penny, but the price of moving it will be upwards of \$400,000, plus the cost of land to house it on, said Mr. Whitehouse. The town may provide a cash incentive to offset the cost of relocation.

On the other hand, the cost to demolish the building is \$60,000.

In 2007, the town purchased land from other nearby properties owned by Mario Greco, who owns the diner's building, but another 1,000 square meters of land was still needed in order to complete the widening

of Main Street and realign Fockler Lane to a safer distance away from Hwy. 48. The land required by the town is right where Da Classic Scoop currently stands.

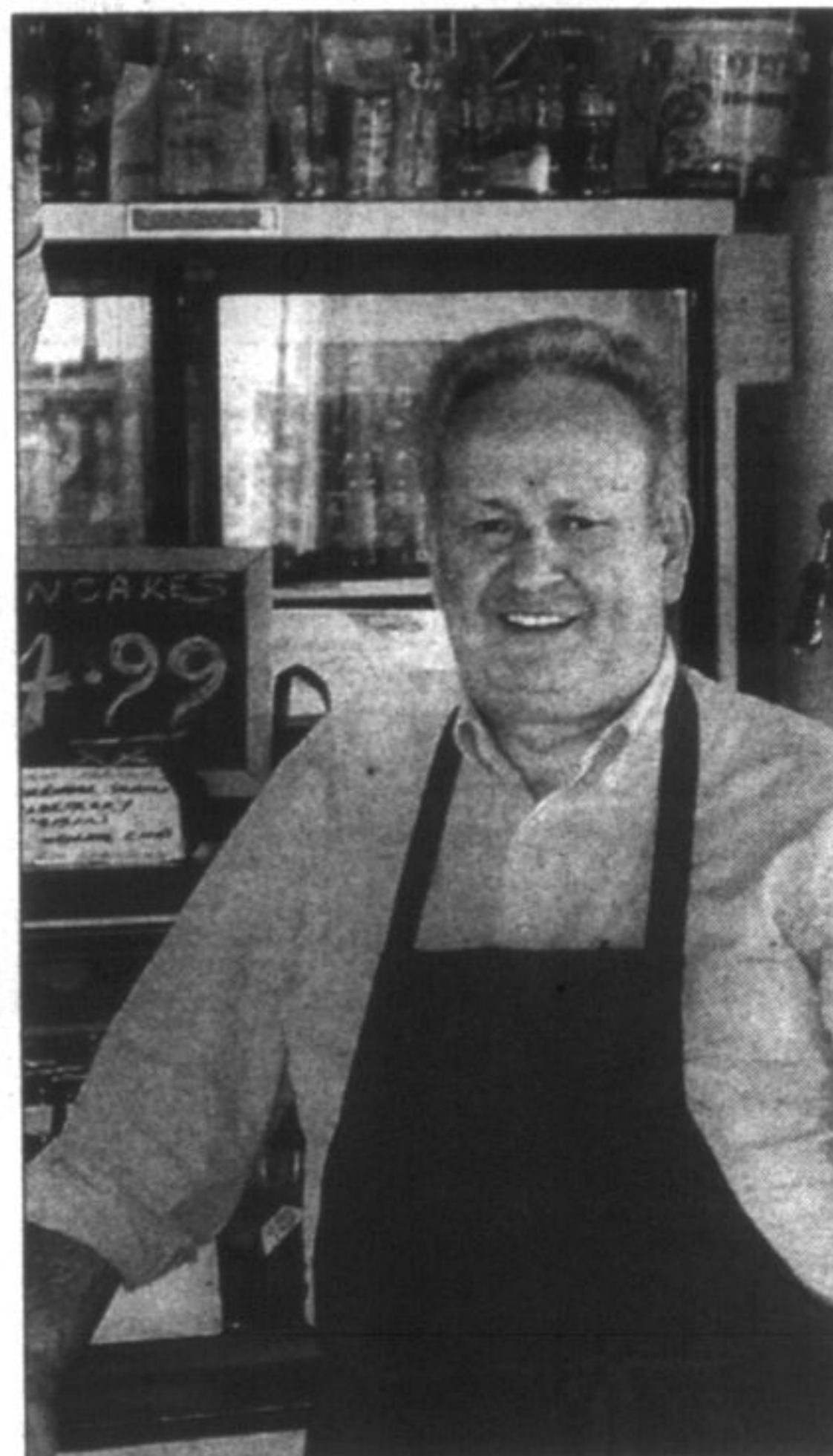
"I wouldn't mind if I could relocate somewhere else in Stouffville," Mr. Greco said. "But (the town) didn't give me much time to look around."

The building, built in the 1850s, was originally a general store and remained as such until 1990, when Mr. Greco opened Da Classic Scoop. Mr. Greco has owned the building since 1974.

The building is included in the town's heritage inventory, but it is not designated under the Ontario Heritage Act because according to Mr. Greco, "I never thought of anything like that."

If no one buys the building, all tenants will have to be gone by March 31 in order for the municipality to clear it for demolition.

The building will, however, be documented for archival purposes and the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum will be given an opportunity to retrieve artifacts or building samples for its collection.



Mario Greco said he wasn't given enough time to find a new location for his Ringwood diner.

## 'Emergency' for York's hospitals

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"It's a significant and immediate impact on the Region of York," she said.

Hospital expansions and spin-off effects can generate 30,000 new jobs, York Central Hospital CEO Bruce Harber said in his presentation.

York Central completes the first phase of its expansion later this year but needs to move on to the next phase to fulfill its vision, he said.

Regional CAO Bruce MacGregor said local funding has always been a crucial component of hospital building and York Region has always provided some measure, dating back to the 1970s.

The provincial government funds 90 per cent of brick and mortar construction but when equipment and other details are factored in, the final figure is about 65 per cent.

That leaves a gap for the local community, from municipal governments and fundraisers, and approvals are withheld until hospitals show they have local support.

Under their proposal, the hospitals would pick up one-third of that gap, while York Region provides the rest.

Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti has staunchly advocated for minimizing tax increases but also conceded that the region had little choice but to fund the hospital's needs. "We are facing an emergency," he said, comparing the region to an emergency room patient.

Vaughan's regional councillors strongly supported the proposal, worried about delays to their long-awaited project.

One after another, councillors railed against the province's exclusion of hospital funding from development charges.

Mr. Scarpitti proposed a subcommittee targeted at lobbying the province for changes but regional chairperson Bill Fisch cautioned that boat has sailed, at least in the short term.

The province excluded hospitals from such funding in 1997 and if changes are to come in the future, strong support from the hospital CEOs will be a crucial factor, he said.

If the charges were in place, the region would be receiving nearly \$7 million a year, Mr. MacGregor said.

There was no question the region should help with funding, the only questions were how much and how it should be phased, Mr. Fisch said.

It could be a few years before any of the hospitals undertake major work and that could coincide with a financial bump from uploaded provincial programs.

Mr. Fisch hoped a concrete proposal would come before the finance committee in February and pass with the budget soon after.

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