

Neighbours to tower site concerned with health, house prices

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Purdy, who lives near the tower's proposed location.

Mr. Purdy, along with a handful of other residents who also live near the proposed site, lobbied council to stop the tower from going up.

"I feel this whole process is being railroaded with the residents on St. John's Sideroad," said Chris Kuettel.

"We're not railroading anything through," replied Mayor Wayne Emmerson.

The mayor did note, however, the town's hands are tied.

Wireless communication installations are exclusively regulated by the federal government. Although municipal permits to erect the tower are not required, Rogers must still "participate in meaningful consultation with the municipalities" and adhere to their protocols.

For Whitchurch-Stouffville, that means

the applicant must consult with surrounding landowners and public agencies.

Rogers hosted a public meeting at the Balantrae Community Centre March 2. Many of the residents who attended that meeting, also came to Tuesday night's council meeting.

"I hear there's nothing we can do about it and that concerns me," Mr. Kuettel said.

Although council listened to the residents' concerns, Mr. Emmerson noted it was imperative they also contact the area's MP, Paul Calandra.

Along with the unsightliness of the proposed tower, residents were concerned about a decline in property value and potential health risks.

"I really don't want to find out 20 years from now my (10-month-old) son has something because of this tower," said Ashley Wright, who noted a friend in their 50s, who grew up near a hydro tower, has battled cancer twice.

According to Rogers, there is no direct scientific link between the effects of radio frequencies from wireless communication installations and it is following Health Canada guidelines.

"I don't take great comfort in the minimum standards of Health Canada," said Larry Douglas.

Residents also questioned the company's site selection process.

According to Rogers, six potential candidates were approached when the proposal was initiated in February 2009.

"The subject property, which was selected, is well suited for the proposed structure



WAYNE EMMERSON: Mayor says Rogers should count 'customers they may lose with this tower'.

as it has a commercial setting (landscaping business) on the property," according to a report from Rogers.

After listening to the residents, Mr. Emmerson admitted he too has some reservations about the tower's proposed location.

A report by staff is expected to come back to council.

"I think council is going to have to take a real good look at this with our staff," Mr. Emmerson said. "Council will take a position."

"I think Rogers needs to take a tally of how many customers they may lose with this tower," Mr. Emmerson said.



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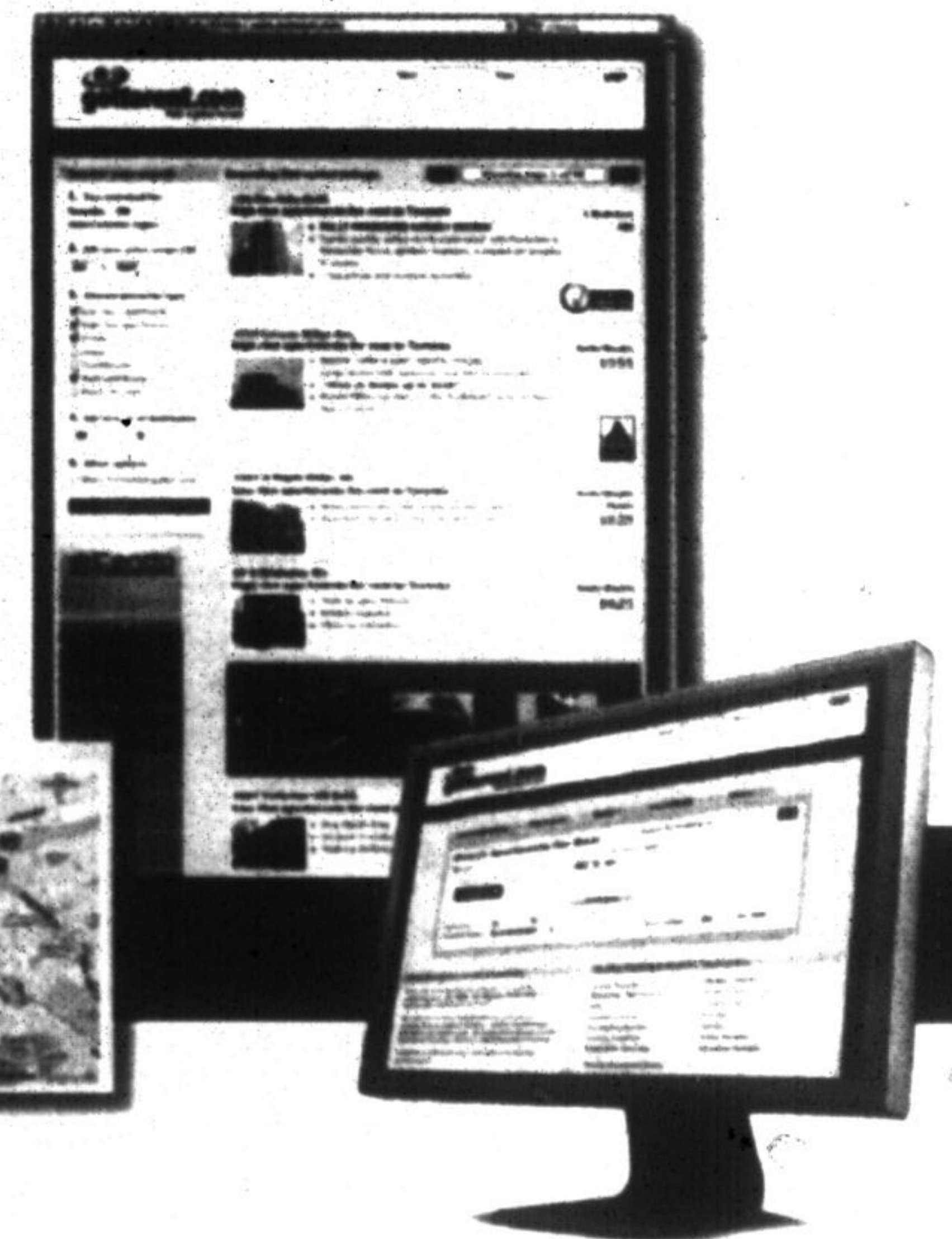
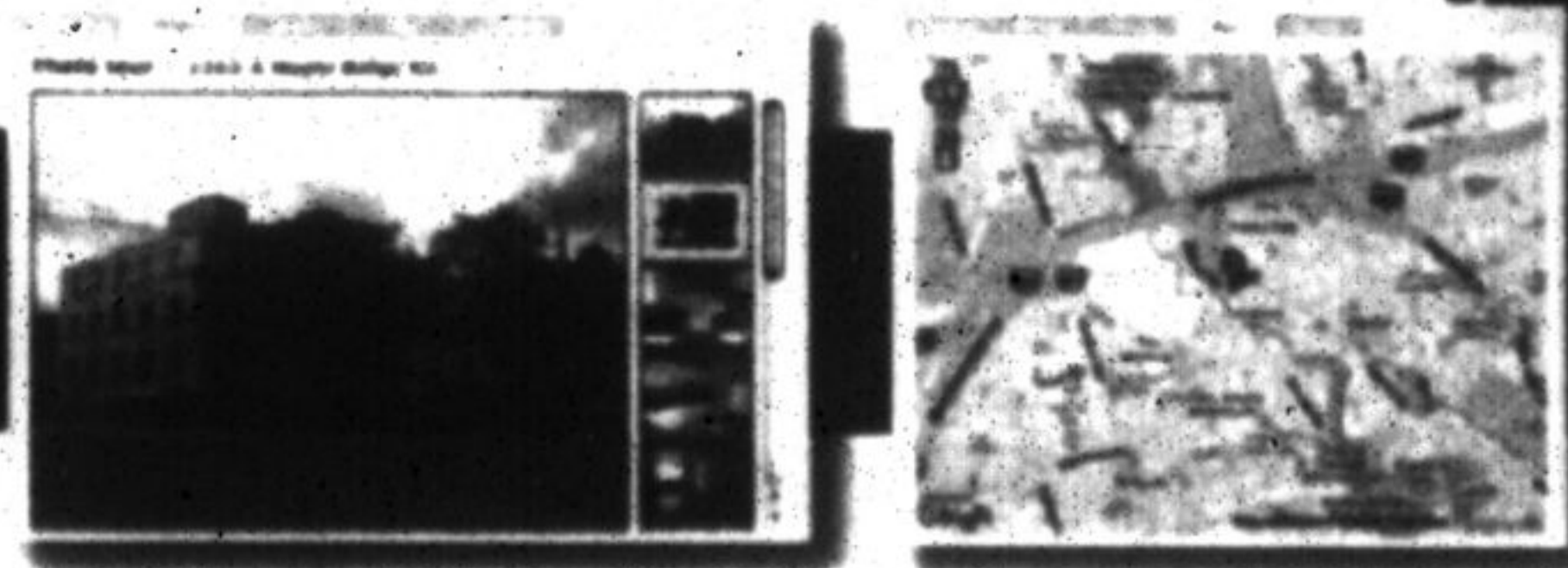
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