

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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Town pioneering business gathering

No agenda for Un-Conference

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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No expert in the field of small business will talk at you about what you should be doing based on charts and market studies.

Instead, at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Un-Conference, which kicks off Small Business Week Oct. 15, you pick the agenda and you become the expert.

"There's absolutely nothing wrong with the traditional model of conferences but it's always good to get some new energy around events," said Nirvana Champion, economic development officer for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

"Stouffville is growing quickly and it is exciting to see our town pioneer a new approach to the way business conferences are run," wrote Anna Rose, the municipality's downtown co-ordinator in an e-mail to The Sun-Tribune.

The N6 conference is geared at the small business — companies with less than 25 staff members.

"Small business is driving the economy, so we're doing what we can to support them," Ms

See **SOCIAL**, page 13.

HISTORIC HIKE



STAFF PHOTO/SUSIE KOCKERSCHIEDT

Historian Fred Robbins points to a map of Main Street from the 1800s as Glenn Jackson looks on during a heritage walk Mr. Robbins ran for the Stouffville Multicultural Association Sunday. Turn to page 12 to see an additional photograph from the walk.

Firefighters pay hikes in spotlight

PC leader Hudak huddles with Emmerson, Bannon

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Pay what you can afford.

That is the up-shot of the Tory's private members' proposed Ability to Pay Act.

Party leader Tim Hudak stopped by Whitchurch-Stouffville yesterday afternoon to speak with Mayor Wayne Emmerson and Councillor Phil Bannon about the legislation.

Council passed its support for the bill during Tuesday night's council meeting, which came as no surprise as Mr. Bannon tabled a very similar recommendation last month that, in part, encouraged the provincial government "... to take action to ensure that the emergency services interest arbitration system is fair and balanced for both parties ..."

After seven months of arbitration with the Whitchurch-Stouffville fire department, the firefighters were recently award a 10-per-cent increase, according to the mayor and councillor.

"We certainly respect our fire and emergency services here in town and what they do for our community, but we also have to respect the ability of the taxpayer here to pay for that service and we are looking at an expansion to 24/7 ... because we want to provide the best possible fire and emergency services we can.

"But that settlement, it puts us in a position where it's restricting our ability to do that, to expand, to provide the services we

See **TAXPAYERS'**, page 16.

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