THIS WEEK

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POLL RESULTS

WE ASKED: Would you support having casinos in York Region as a way of generating tax dollars for services?

YOU SAID: Yes: 50%; No: 50%.

This week's question: Should Vaughan cut down oak trees to satisfy concerns over nut allergies?

SPEAK OUT

"Did everyone complain this much when the church was built at Featherstone and Denison? I'm pretty sure the residents there were also concerned about 'inhaling gas fumes' and parking every Sunday."

- zsa 1982 on Markham mosque battle

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Province expanding courthouse

BY JEREMY GRIMALDI

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Years of scheduling pressures at the Newmarket courthouse has finally resulted in Ontario's Attorney General applying for an expansion of the 165,000-square-foot facility.

The move comes after the ministry was criticized for refusing to add more court-rooms and associated staff, despite court times steadily increasing at the facility, which serves all of York Region.

Instead of expanding the building's bricks and mortar, the ministry took a different approach, launching the Justice on Target program here and in other centres in 2008 in a bid to reduce the number of days it takes to complete a case by 30 per cent.

Although former Attorney General Chris Bentley argued repeatedly the program was working, a York Region Media Group analysis this summer showed the real-time aver age pace of justice has actually slowed.

The total average number of days required to deal with a case in Newmarket last year was 285 — an increase of 90 from 2007. If bench warrant days are removed, it took an average of 162 — a drop of 27.

Current Attorney General John Gerretsen said in March the Justice on Target program will continue.

The application, which includes a 17,000-square-foot single-storey addition and landscape work, was heard by Newmarket's site plan review committee last week.

The addition is to be built at the north east corner of the existing building.

On top of additional courtrooms, new court staff will also be added, according to the ministry.

- with files from Torstar Network





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