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STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Steve Balsdon of Steve and Liz's No-Frills gave over \$2,000 to the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank this week. Joan Doble, treasurer of the food bank, accepted the donation. The bank is moving into Stouffville this fall.

Food bank hopes to open new location after delays

BY ALI RAZA

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Dust and delays related to construction work at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank's new Ringwood Drive location are leading to an elusive completion date.

Though she'd like to see the new location open and operating before Thanksgiving, board member Joan Doble isn't optimistic that will be the case.

"I was there last week and they (contractor) are promising the end of the month," Doble said. "I don't believe any day, because I was there and nothing had been done.'

Whitchurch-Stouffville Food announced in November 2015 that it had found a new location on Ringwood Drive.

The new location is split between two units, one owned by Smileville Dental and the other owned by SMC Project Realization and Management.

The food bank has stored some items in the new location. Smileville Dental has offered an office space to store food items, mostly pasta.

But in the adjacent unit currently under construction by SMC, the few crates of cans stored are covered in dust.

"We're a little frustrated to tell you the truth; this has been going on since last December," Doble said. "We don't want to move too much in because when they're working, all that drywall dust goes all over."

The construction was stalled early this year because a permit was required from the town to construct a loft - an addition the contractor desired.

The permit was granted in July, but, by that time "his workers were busy doing other projects," Doble explained.

SMC president Ron Carleton says construction is on track, anticipating it will be complete by the end of the month.

'We're a little frustrated to tell you the truth; this has been going on since last December.'

"We're trying to do things economically," he said. "We're waiting on trades, everything else is done, mechanical is done, electrical is done, stairs are in, mezzanine's built, it's a matter of drywall, paint and carpet."

Doble is requesting the contractor install a plastic divider to allow food to be stored and not be covered in debris and dust from construction work.

The two units total 2,500 square feet, one will be used for storage and the other for distribution.

Originally intended to open as the new location in the first quarter of 2016, as of September, the new location remains under construction.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank opened in 1991. It has operated out of Churchill Community Church, on Ninth Line north of Musselman's Lake, a 10-minute drive from Stouffville.