

King Township Chamber to work toward unification

By Bill Rea

The potential unification of the two Chambers of Commerce in King Township into one body gained strength last Wednesday night.

Members of the King Township Chamber voted unanimously that a committee should be in place to work toward creating a unified body by January 2008, if not earlier, and that the two Chambers work jointly on mutually agreed projects over the coming year.

Members agreed to the motion at the King Township Chamber's annual general meeting after a minor word change, aimed at specifying the unified Chamber would be in King. Chamber President Maureen Richardson told the membership the Chamber executive had agreed unanimously with the resolution.

Discussions between the two bodies have been going on for some time. Earlier last month, the Nobleton Schomberg District Chamber of Commerce voted overwhelmingly (but not unanimously) "to explore these options further."

Barb Davis, president of the Nobleton Schomberg Chamber, was at last week's meeting in King City and explained some of the members had been concerned about losing their rural character. She added there will always be some people who don't agree.

Jamie Smyth, the Township's economic development officer, was at the meeting and favoured unification. "It has to be done for all the right reasons" for the Chambers to work together, he cautioned. Smyth added it's important for there to be a strong voice from the local business community.

He also pointed out there are nine municipalities in York Region, and 10 Chambers, so he observed that it might sometimes be hard for King to be taken seriously in that environment.

Regarding the rural feel, Smyth said there are some

unique features that would have to be addressed, and that can be done while maintaining the strengths of local villages.

Chamber Director Henry Verbruggen observed there were three Chambers in King up until about a year ago, but those three bodies were able to set up an economic development committee.

"We have been working together," he declared.

"Everything will evolve and we'll just keep working away," Richardson remarked.

Economic development progressing in King



King's Economic Development Officer Jamie Smyth addressed last week's meeting of the King Township Chamber of Commerce.

By Bill Rea

Progress continues to be made in efforts to promote King Township as a place of economic vitality and one in which to do business.

King Township's Economic Development Officer Jamie Smyth was delivering that message last Wednesday as he addressed the annual general meeting of the King Township Chamber of Commerce.

Smyth pointed out he's only been on the job about nine months, recalling there were three chambers in King when he arrived. "It was something that I found very interesting," he commented, adding last year's merger of the Nobleton and Schomberg and District Chambers was a step in the right direction.

Although his position has sort of been a case of starting from scratch, Smyth pointed out it's been talked about a lot over the years, including the 2005 King



King Township Deputy Mayor Bill Cober swore in the executive for the coming year of the King Township Chamber of Commerce last Wednesday night. The executive includes Maureen Richardson, president; Peter Calluori, vice-president; Cathy Webster, secretary; Don McKnight, treasurer; and directors Audrey de Souza Moraes, Paul Duckett, Tom Dobson, Cameron Fellman, Maria Ferrante, Bill Lacey, Jeff Lacey, Liina Peacock, Jack Rupke, Robert Silcox, Fr. Suren Nathan and Henry Verbruggen.



Chamber of Commerce President Maureen Richardson was flanked by Treasurer Don McKnight and Secretary Cathy Webster at last week's annual general meeting.

Summit and it has come up at other times, such as when infrastructure issues have been discussed. The need has been seen "to direct more resources to economic development."

"Definitely, we're moving in the right direction," he said, observing that some 95 per cent of the property tax load is being carried by the residential and agricultural sector. "That's a real imbalance," he declared, adding there has to be more commercial and industrial operations to help take on some of that burden. The Chamber has been pushing for that.

"We're not just a bedroom community," he said. "We're able to sustain ourselves and build on our strengths."

Smyth pointed out there is land available for commercial development that would be compatible with the Provincial Greenbelt and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. What is needed, he said, are tools that can be used to attract appropriate businesses. "I think it's important that we pool our resources; pool our efforts," he said.

Smyth also pointed out some businesses in King are struggling, as people go outside the township for their needs. He said he's talked to business people and has been told one thing that is needed is more opportunity for people living in King to work here as well.

Underhill wants paid bills listed on Web

Bills paid by King Township should be listed on the municipality's Web site, as far as Councillor Jane Underhill is concerned.

Underhill put forth a notice of motion at last week's council meeting, calling for the accounts payable to be posted on the Web site at the same time as the council agendas are available.

In putting forth the motion, she pointed out the Province is promoting accountability and transparency of municipal government, and council also wishes to improve communication with residents.

The issue is slated to be discussed at the council meeting this coming Monday.

An Evening of Stewardship for Landowners on the Oak Ridges Moraine

An Open House presented by Halton-Peel Woodlands & Wildlife Stewardship and York Environmental Stewardship on behalf of all partners involved in the Caring for the Moraine Project: Western Headwaters Area

Where: Schomberg Arena Hall

251 Western Ave. Schomberg (west off Main St., south of Hwy 9)

When: Thursday February 22, 2007 6:00 — 9:00 p.m.
Presentations begin at 7 p.m.

Hear: Landowner perspectives on stewardship on the Oak Ridges Moraine
Talk to: Representatives of organizations offering stewardship programs and services
Learn about: Forest, stream, wetland and grassland stewardship, protecting your property's natural features for future generations, where to access technical and financial support, and more

Open House: Meet representatives of the Caring for the Moraine Project: Western Headwaters Area partner organizations:

- Credit Valley Conservation
- Halton-Peel Woodlands & Wildlife Stewardship
- Lake Simcoe Region Conservation
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Nottawasaga Valley Conservation
- Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation
- Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust
- Oak Ridges Trail Association
- Peel Region
- Toronto and Region Conservation
- Town of Caledon
- Trout Unlimited
- Wetland Habitat Fund
- York Environmental Stewardship
- Other local partners

No Cost to Attend - For further information call: Brian Peterkin, Stewardship Coordinator — York Environmental Stewardship at (905) 713-7732



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