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Contact my office:

905-832-8585 ext 8349

email: alan.shefman@vaughan.ca

www.vaughan.ca

Executive Assistant:

Debi Traub

905-832-8585 ext 8685

Email: debi.traub@vaughan.ca

2141 Major Mackenzie Drive

Vaughan, Ontario L6A 1T1

Web Links

Environmental Responsibility - Pesticide Ban Initiated



Councillor Shefman's Alternative to Using Pesticides!

At the February 5, 2007 Committee of the Whole meeting, Councillor Alan Shefman brought a recommendation asking staff to provide a report to Council by May 1, 2007 recommending a new bylaw for the city that would eliminate the cosmetic use of pesticides on public and private property. The recommendation was approved unanimously and will go to Council on February 12.

This recommendation is the culmination of many years work by a local community group, the Vaughan Environment Action Committee, and a natural progression for the city in its efforts to provide the highest quality environment for all residents.

As early as 2001, Council approved the prohibition of pesticides in Ward 4 and 5 parks. By 2005 all parks in the City were pesticide free. Nationally, since the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the Hudson, Quebec bylaw banning pesticides on private property, hundreds of municipalities have passed bylaws addressing this issue.

In his remarks at Committee, Alan said: "that passing this bylaw is a natural progression for Vaughan. With all the evidence before us it is only sensible to extend the ban throughout the city. The health of our

City of Vaughan - www.vaughan.ca

York Region Police - www.yrp.ca

www.yorkregiontransit.com

www.greeningvaughan.ca

ROADWATCH

<http://city.vaughan.on.ca/community/CitizenReportForm.cfm>

residents is too important to allow more pollutants into our environment for purely cosmetic purposes. I believe that we have an important stewardship responsibility. As municipal politicians we must take a realistic and achievable role to address the significant environmental issues that we face today.”

So what does a Vaughan City Councillor do? #1 (*An ongoing series*)

Well, there are lots of meetings!

Generally, as an absolute bare minimum, I attend a Council meeting and a Committee of the Whole (CW) meeting every two weeks. This month, for example, Council meetings are on February 12 and 26 and Committee on February 5 and 19. We also have two Committee of the Whole Working Sessions the day following Council. As well, on Committee of the Whole days, we have what is called a Committee of the Whole Public Hearing meeting in the evening. So what are all these meetings about?

1. Council

These meetings start at 1:00 and will vary in length from 2 to 4 hours. They are the sessions that we hold to pass into law the recommendations that we have debated at our CW meetings. Out of the Council decisions, we then approve by-laws that put these decisions into force – they become part of the “law” of our municipality. At Council, members of the public are not allowed to make deputations – the public has their opportunity at the CW sessions. At the beginning of a Council meeting, which is always chaired by the Mayor, we are asked if we would like to “call” any items on the agenda. All of the items called are then debated at the meeting. If an item is not called, it will be passed through a general motion. Also, it is not uncommon at Council meetings to make presentations to residents and others.

2. Committee of the Whole

The CW meetings, also beginning at 1:00 pm, tend to be much longer than Council meetings, sometimes going on for four hours or more. They sessions allow for issues to be vigorously debated by members of Council with the input of any interested members of the public. With very few exceptions everything being brought to Council must first be presented at CW. Any member of the public can ask to make a deputation on any item of concern or interest at the CW meeting. Information on how to do this is available from the Clerk’s office. These deputations often spark extensive discussions with members of Council. Also, in the course of any discussion at CW, a member of the public can come forward to make a presentation. All presentations are restricted to a maximum of five minutes. This is also the time for staff reports to be presented and new initiatives to be brought forward by members of Council. At the end of the debate,

Council votes, deciding whether or not to send it to Council for approval. These meetings are chaired by each member of Council on a rotating basis for one month at a time.

More information is available at <http://doiop.com/4j9408>

So what does a City Councillor do? #2 will look at CW Working Sessions, Public Hearing Committee meetings and the Budget process.

Vaughan is Booming!

The City's Building Standards Department has recently released the Vaughan construction activity report for 2006.

We had an outstanding year for construction in the City, topping \$1.3 billion total for the first time in our history. The closest that we have been to this standard was in 2001 when we were over \$1.1 billion. Last year was one of our lowest in years when we had \$837 million.

The construction activity is divided up into residential, commercial, industrial, institutional and miscellaneous projects. Housing was by far the largest area of construction at \$976 million, a growth of over \$500 million from the year before.

Upcoming Public Meetings & Events

February 8th – YRT – Viva Public Meeting, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Thornhill Presbyterian Church – Open House 7 to 8 p.m. –
Speakers at 8:00 p.m. Subject: Planned right of way on Yonge Street from Highway 7 to Steeles

February 20th – Thornhill Storm Drainage Improvements, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. – Garnet A. Williams C.C. Subject: Impending study looking at ways to address the serious drainage problems in the area that saw extensive flooding during the August 2005 storm

February 21st – YRT – Viva Public Meeting 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Public Meeting –Garnet A. Williams. C.C. . Subject: Planned right of way on Yonge Street from Highway 7 to Steeles

February 22 – Thornhill Heritage Conservation District Review – 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. - Thornhill Presbyterian Church located at 271 Centre Street.. Subject: public consultation on the ongoing study of the Thornhill historic area.

February 28 – Hefhill Park Community Meeting, 7 p.m. to

9 p.m. – Thoreau MacDonald House, 121 Centre Street.
One of a series of community meetings initiated by Councillor
Shefman to provide an opportunity for residents to have a say in
their local parks

WINTERFEST

FREE ENTERTAINMENT! FREE ENTRY! FREE FOOD!

Don't forget Vaughan's celebration of Winter
Sunday February 11th, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
(Official Welcome at 11:30 a.m.)

Vellore Village Community Centre, 1 Villa Royale Avenue,
Woodbridge.

PASS IT ON!!

We want MORE subscribers to W5Update!!

Do you know anyone in Ward 5 who is NOT getting the UPDATE –
they should!!

Please forward your copy of W5Update to your friends, or, if you
prefer, send us their email address and we will send them a copy for
their consideration.

AND

Stay tuned,
For a new and improved W5Update in the upcoming months