Candidates Debate Development Of Newcastle Waterfront Lands

Oct 29/97 C.S.

by Lorraine Manfredo
Staff Writer

Waterfront development was a key issue dividing candidates at an election forum in Newcastle Thursday night.

Candidates faced several questions from residents still fuming about a Council decision last week allowing the Kaitlin Group to go ahead with plans to build costal villas, and possibly a casino, as well as town approval for single-lane traffic through the Mill Street hole-in-the-wall underpass.

Ward Three Regional Councillor Ann Dreslinski, who supported the development, took some heat during the evening, at one point even being jeered by the official timekeeper.

She used her first trip to the podium as an opportunity to defend her position on the project.

"I know many of you are quite angry over the Kaitlin Development," she said. "I supported it and I still do. Over the next ten years, that development is going to be a $300 million development. And that will bring jobs to the community."

Dreslinski said the development conformed to regional and official plans and would return the lakefront to the people of the community.

Mayor Diane Hamre also wound up defending her position regarding the

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Kaitlin Project Goes Ahead

by Laura J. Richards
Staff Writer

Clarington's mayor never got a chance to "revisit" Council's vote on the development of coastal villas in the Kaitlin Group's Newcastle waterfront project on Monday night, Oct. 27.

Mayor Diane Hamre asked for a suspension of the by-laws to allow debate to take place, but no one seconded the motion.

Acting Mayor David Scott almost pleaded with his fellow-councillors to second the motion, but to no avail.

As Mayor Hamre rose from her seat to go back to the mayor's chair, she remarked, "thanks a lot, guys!"

Prior to Mayor Hamre asking for the suspension of the by-laws, Ron Webb, a lawyer for the Kaitlin Group, told the councillors during the delegation period, last year during negotiations over Phase One of the devel-

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OVER

Bits

MAYORALTY FORUM — This Thursday, October 30th, you can meet mayoralty candidates Diane Hamre and Cecil Mackesey at a forum sponsored by the Oshawa/Clarington Chamber of Commerce. It will be held at the Bowmanville Lions Centre, 26 Beech Ave., from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Panelists will ask candidates questions on issues affecting local business. And, time permitting, questions will be taken from the floor. The forum is jointly sponsored by The Canadian Statesman and the Oshawa/Clarington Chamber of Commerce.

CITIZENS PATROL DOWNTOWNS — This Friday night, there will be patrols by volunteers in the downtowns of Clarington to ensure Halowe'en is safe for all concerned. The patrols begin around seven p.m. Some downtown stores will be closing early to allow parents to be with their children on Hallowe'en.

NEW HOME FOR FOOD BANK — The Clarington East Food Bank has a new home, as of November 4th. It will be located at 87 Mill St. N., Newcastle, at the rear of the building (lower level). Hours will be from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday and from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursday.

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN HOST CANDIDATE MEETING — The Bowmanville Business and Professional Women's Club has planned an all-car
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Candidates Debate

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waterfront development and faced questions about the safety of traffic going through the old hole-in-the-wall bridge under the railway.

Development at the lake has been delayed for decades, she said, and the reason has been the hole-in-the-wall (the CN overpass). Hamre admitted the single lane solution was not a perfect set-up, but was assured by municipal staff that traffic volumes would be monitored. "There will not be another building permit issued if traffic gets to a certain level. It will not become an unsafe situation."

Hamre also said she had supported the costal villa phase in the Kaitlin development plan because the buildings would be on bluffs and not on land where beach is assessable.

The deal was also a way to get more public land for the town, she said.

However, Hamre admitted there may have been some confusion among councillors on the day of the costal villa vote. And, for that reason, promised to ask for a reconsideration of the issue at Monday's GPA meeting.

Hamre's sole opponent for the mayor's chair, Cecil Mackesey, argued that the voices of the community have not been heard on the Newcastle waterfront development.

"The community has been consistent in its message to the mayor. Yet, the mayor now says there was confusion. The only person confused is the mayor. Let us recall the deciding vote on this issue was cast by the mayor."

Mackesey also criticized the present Council and mayor for not being tougher negotiators for more public waterfront land "We had an opportunity to get property and we could have done a lot better," he said

He reminding the audience that out of 33 kilometers of waterfront property in Clarington, only one is for public use.

John Mutton, regional councillor candidate for Ward 3&4, said he would be vigilant in providing more public access to the lake and also came out strongly against a possible casino at the lake: "I would be the councillor that vehemently opposes and leads a fight against a casino at the Port of Newcastle."

He also vowed to reintroduce the discussion about the CNR rail bridge. "This Council has chosen not to listen to the public."

Charlie Trim, one of two candidates for the Ward 4 local councillor's seat, also expressed strong anti-casino stand.

"I am against a casino in Newcastle of any kind," he said.

Beverly Wakefield, also running for the local seat in Ward 4, reminded the audience it is the province that issues casino licences. "If the province listens to us, with what we know, there will be no casino; but if the province doesn't listen, we might have one anyway."

Cecil Mackesey said he personally does not support a casino although he would support a public vote on the issue. He also doesn't believe that people in Courtice should have opportunity to vote on it. "It is not on their back door."

The mayor was still reserving judgement on a casino. "I don't think that Clarington is ready for a casino but I will wait to hear from the people on the issue," said Hamre.

The candidates meeting was jointly hosted by the Newcastle BIA, Newcastle Ratepayers' Association, and the Newcastle and District Chamber of Commerce.