

Caledon Seniors' Centre says 'no' to theatre addition

Written By ALYSSA PARKHILL

Beverley Nurden and Jane Chapman, representing the Caledon Seniors' Centre, started off the Town Hall meeting this past Tuesday at Caledon Council with a presentation in regards to the potential addition to the Senior Centre Rotary Place expansion.

'I attended the meeting on Oct 22 and submitted a letter from the Board of Directors at the Caledon Seniors' Centre. We support the theory of a theatre being in Caledon, as a separate entity. We emphasize that we do not wish to have it interfere or delay our progress that we have worked for, along with the town,' states Chapman.

Other regulars from the seniors' centre are also opposed to the proposed location of the theatre, while the architects are opposed to the theatre being built on the East end of the expansion. There is, it would appear, an impasse.

When the map was first released, showing where the theatre would be built, on the West side, which is located in the courtyard, concerns immediately arose.

'The drawings that we all accepted from the architects showed us that, after we connect with the Wellness Centre, it leaves us a lovely tranquil courtyard, which we use for barbeques and games, where seniors can sit and enjoy. Also, the wellness centre would enjoy it too,' explains Chapman. 'The Town of Caledon also uses this space in the summer for summer programs for children. With the courtyard being enclosed, summer camp is more easily managed for some children with special needs, making it a safer, controlled environment.'

Another concern that Chapman explained was that the theatre proposal would cut out natural light from shining into parts of the centre. They would lose one window and one door, while another window would look onto a wall. Chapman and those from the seniors' centre are trying to hold on to key aspects that make the facility enjoyable.

Another key factor that concerns Chapman is the amount of parking proposed. The Caledon Seniors' Centre already has approximately 700 members, and only 78 parking spots. The number of seniors is rapidly growing, with the organization projecting to have 1,000 members before too long, with a host of new programs also on the horizon.

With 2020 budget discussions expected to begin soon, Chapman and the others from the Seniors' Centre, hope to have the long talked about expansion to the facility approved in the new year.

The expansion has been a talking point for the past three years and Chapman, along with the board are growing impatient with the lack of movement on the file.

'We see a light at the end of the tunnel, and look forward to hearing the budget has been passed in January 2020,' says Chapman.

Regional Coun. Ward 5 Annette Groves thanked Jane Chapman for her presentation.

'I've been involved with this seniors' centre expansion for many, many years and I know it's been a long time coming and I said this last time. I think both projects are important for the community. The seniors' expansion is important because we do have a lot of seniors,' said Groves. 'The lecture hall is important too because we have a very large arts community and culture is a really big part of a community.'

Mayor Allan Thompson asked that Council be allowed to gather a more thorough and detailed report after hearing the concerns from Jane Chapman and factors heard from Council.

?We're not losing anything on time,? says Thompson.