

Editorial ? Opposition remains, but Canadian Tire is coming

We can all admire tenacity, and people who are firm in their beliefs.

But there comes a point at which clutching to an idea becomes counter-productive.

We continue to get that feeling as we hear of the continuing opposition to the Canadian Tire facility being planned for the Bolton industrial area.

True, it's a very big facility, and as we observed when we last addressed this issue in this space in June, we suspect the sheer size of it has spooked a lot of people. It is, after all, slated to take up about 180 acres at the northwest corner of Coleraine Drive and Healey Road. And it is going to generate a lot of truck traffic. There have been various figures cited in terms of the number of trucks that will be entering and leaving the site every day. Suffice to say it will be a lot.

The main point is there was an extensive public process that led up to Town council approving the development. And that process dated back years before anyone heard that Canadian Tire was even interested in the site. It goes back to the time before the current Town council took office; to a time when a previous council decided these lands should be set aside for industrial and employment uses.

That has been in the works for years, and that is what Canadian Tire is proposing.

There are those who have problems with the process, or with the way things worked out. But there are also many people in the community who support the idea. They might not be making as much noise as the opposition, but we believe there is much to support here.

One of the big advantages involves the fact that Canadian Tire is a very large and prestigious Canadian company which seeks to make a massive investment in this community, putting a large development on lands that have been set aside for this use. Such a substantial investment, to our mind, means there is going to be considerable pride in ownership. That would indicate a promise of a well-run, attractive facility that would be a long-term asset to the community.

If not for this one large development, the lands would likely attract smaller operations. Many of them would be reputable, but would all of them? Would their trucks be as well maintained as Canadian Tire boasts of keeping its fleet? Would the truck traffic be reduced? Would there be any type of coordination with several companies operating from this site, as opposed to just one?

And let us not forget the financial benefits.

Last Wednesday (Nov. 6) saw the opportunity for members of the public to comment directly on the Town's proposed 2014 budget. The Town is currently looking at a tax increase of 4.98 per cent, and there are some in the community who don't like that. It's to sign with them. Who among us likes the thought of paying higher taxes?

One of the problems is the residential taxpayer has to pick up the bulk of the municipal tax bill in Caledon; on the order of 82 per cent. It would be nice to have more come from the industrial and commercial sectors, but that's not going to happen until there's more industrial and commercial assessment, and that means developing the lands that have been set aside for such development. That's what the lands in question have been set aside for. There's a company willing to do the development. We would submit the problems people fear are going to exist no matter what kind of industrial or employment development goes in.

When you consider the alternatives, this proposal looks too good to pass up, doesn't it?