

New fence a concern in Bolton

By Bill Rea

A fence, erected last week between Bolton Country Plaza and Bolton Shopping Centre, is causing controversy in the village, and especially among the merchants.

And the Town of Caledon has become involved too.

Deputy Fire Chief Mark Wallace reported there are concerns that the fence blocks access for emergency vehicles between the two properties. He added it also restricts access to a fire department connection to water pipes.

He added an inspection order was issued on both properties. They can be appealed, but if there's no resolution, the matter will end up in court, where responsibility will be determined.

By yesterday (Wednesday) morning, sections of the fencing had been cut away in at least three places, allowing people to pass through, but not vehicles.

Bolton Country Plaza to the north is owned by Stonebridge Community Driven Developments and Bolton Shopping Centre to the south (at the northeast corner of Queen Street and Allan Drive) is owned by the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Toronto.

Representatives from both Stonebridge and the Diocese declined comment.

John Spano, who operates Bolton Mens and Ladies Wear in Bolton Shopping Centre, said work on the fence started last Wednesday, with no warning or notice.

"We've been here about 30 years," he commented, adding the plaza has existed for about 40.

"It's obviously a big change," he added, pointing out the fence inhibits his customers from parking in front of his shop. He said that takes away from one of the benefits of being located in a plaza, especially around Christmas.

Mayor Allan Thompson said he's sympathetic to what the merchants are going through, and urged the community to continue supporting them.

He's also not impressed with the act of erecting the fence. "It was a Grinch tactic on the part of the property owner," he remarked.

The mayor also cited the original site plan for the property, which was updated some years later when the Harvey's opened.

"There's not to be any fence there," he said.

"We're trying to figure out how to get through it," he added.



Crews were out last Wednesday working on the fence between the two plazas.