

## Regional issues discussed by candidates at various meetings in Ward 1

By Bill Rea

Ward 1 residents have had a couple of chances over the last couple of weeks to hear from the candidates seeking to represent them at the Regional level on Caledon council.

They discussed issues at a session in Caledon East hosted by the Caledon Chamber of Commerce. Last Monday had them at a meeting hosted by the Alton Village Association. The following night, they were in Inglewood for a meeting hosted by the Village of Inglewood Association.

Incumbent Richard Paterak and challenger Barb Shaughnessy were at all three sessions. Former councillor Jim Pattison was just at the meeting in Alton.

On the issue of working with the Chamber to assist local business, Paterak said he wants to work with other councillors and the Chamber to improve communications.

He added Caledon consists of a vast land mass, but 81 per cent of that won't be developed. There is a need for economic activity in those lands. He added all areas of Caledon need to have access to high-speed internet.

He said the Town, Region and the Chamber can work together to encourage business activity.

Shaughnessy said she remembered a time when the Chamber was successful, but it lost funding from the Town.

She said she would put that money back in place.

"If you are successful, then we will be successful," she told the Chamber.

She also suggested the Chamber should have an office on the west side of town.

"Over there, we feel a little left out," she said.

The issue of traffic woes on Highway 10 was raised.

Paterak said the number of fatalities in the area could be attributed to driver error, adding the tragedies are not the result of design flaws in the road. He called for more enforcement and to make people more alert and have them drive defensively.

Shaughnessy said she's been part of a group lobbying the Town to do something, and it took four years to get them to bring a motion forward.

Matters relating to the aggregate industry have been coming a lot in the campaign.

Paterak said all pits have site plans, and they are the enforcement mechanism. He added that pits can be closed if there are infractions, and that it has happened.

As well, Paterak said the Ministry of Natural Resources can close a pit if trucks don't follow haul routes as they are supposed to.

Shaughnessy commented that the Town's aggregate bylaw of 1985 came up for review this year, and it only went to council recently, after it had been rendered a lame duck.

"I don't know why council can't be pro-active," she said. "That goes right across the board."

"We deserve better," she added. "That's why we need to renew."

Shaughnessy commented she concerned that she sees a rural community being affected by urban expansion, adding she believes in using brain storming to find solutions that work.

She also said that's what Ward 1 residents want.

Paterak said he tries to be constructive every day and learn as much as he can.

One problem, he said, is truth isn't always nice, adding there are some things the council can't change because the Province tells municipalities what to do.

The candidates were asked how they would improve the quality of life in Inglewood.

Paterak admitted that was hard to answer because he views Inglewood as one of the happiest communities in the ward.

He did say he would like to expand recreation opportunities.

Shaughnessy said she would talk about the traffic situation on Highway 10, commenting on the "lack of due diligence done by council."

One woman in Inglewood observed there had been a lot of talk about improving quality of life, asking the candidates to define "quality of life."

"Family," Shaughnessy replied.

"Fulfillment," Paterak said.

The finances of the Town were on the minds of some of the people in Inglewood, with observations that the Town wins awards for budgeting, but there are problems with the process.

Shaughnessy said the budget process should be simpler. "I don't know how we got that award," she commented.

The future of the arena in Inglewood was raised.

Shaughnessy said the fire department had tried to rent the facility and ran into a lot of red tape.

Paterak pointed out single-pad arenas never make a lot of money. He added the federal government provided a lot of the funding for the ice pads at Caledon Community Complex and that drew some of the use from Inglewood. But he added things have been improving.

The issue of how to deal with an aging population came up in Inglewood.

Shaughnessy observed there are restrictions in the type of accommodations that are permitted by the Niagara Escarpment Plan, and she said thought should be given to changing that.

Paterak said the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) recently endorsed the idea of apartments in houses.

Dealing with red tape, Paterak agreed it's at Town Hall, but added a lot of it is imposed by the Province on such things as planning documents. He added he would meet with anyone who runs into problems.

Shaughnessy related one story of a client who had sought a permit from the Town, and was told it could be issued in 10 days. But if the client asked a question, that 10-day period started all over again. Simple applications should be dealt with in a day, she maintained.

The meeting in Alton included questions on future development in the hamlet.

Shaughnessy observed a study started on Alton in 2009, and it would be nice if that were completed. Future development needs a complete plan, she maintained.

Pattison said he knows the area well, with two rivers meeting at the Grange. He said Credit Valley Conservation should be on that all the time.

There were also questions about the streetscapes in Alton.

Pattison said some of the Hydro polls are rotten, adding if they have to be replaced, consideration could be given to putting the lines underground.

That would be costly, Paterak said, but added money has been budgetted for work on Queen Street in the hamlet.

Shaughnessy wondered how much, commenting people in Alton feel left out.



Jim Pattison, Richard Paterak and Barb Shaughnessy were facing the voters last Monday in Alton.