

## Southgate seeking support for SLAPP

By Josh Braun

The Township of Southgate is supporting the Province's Bill 52, and looking for support from other municipalities to go along. Caledon council recently received the request for support from Southgate without comment.

Bill 52, also known as SLAPP (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation), seeks to amend the Courts of Justice Act, the Libel and Slander Act and the Statutory Powers Procedure Act to protect expression on matters of public interest and enact many of the recommendations by the Anti SLAPP panel of 2010.

SLAPP is a tactic which is often viewed as a means to silence, intimidate and deter people from participating in discussions on matters of public interest, according to the letter from Southgate. It added the Province has stated that the ability to freely participate in public discussion about matters in the public's interest without fear is fundamental to a fair democratic society.

Southgate officials believe Bill 52 should help discourage courts that unjustifiably limit the public's free speech.