

Westmount Ave. to be paved in gold

By Rowan Lomas
Astonished municipal representatives lashed out at town staff during a Sept. 19 Innisfil council meeting after learning road construction on Westmount Ave. will cost almost twice as much as estimated.

Innisfil's planning and development department has requested an additional \$381,400 for the project, bringing the total budget to over \$1 million. In addition to the cost overruns, Deputy Mayor Gord Wauchope was

dismayed to learn construction crews won't begin work until the spring, breaking council's promise to urbanize the street with new sidewalks, curbs, storm drains and sanitary sewers by this fall.

"I'm appalled at this...I can't believe that a bill could cost over 50 per cent more than the estimates," said Ward 6 councillor Rod Boynton. "Is that an engineering mistake?"

Planning and development Director Robert McAuley responded

that there were unexpected design costs, as well as other incremental costs over the last year. Town staff also believed the street to be in better condition, but discovered the asphalt is crumbling and requires more work than anticipated.

Surveys and soil investigations conducted earlier this year revealed "an extremely high natural water table in the proposed construction area," according to McAuley's report to council, forcing crews to elevate the road.

Having inadequate sewers throughout the municipality to accommodate drainage from Westmount Ave. also requires the removal, replacement and upsizing of existing storm pipes, noted the report.

Engineers knew the storm drainage problems in Innisfil and should have done their homework when calculating a construction estimate, said Belle Ewart Councillor Bill Van Berkel. He recommended staff, in the future, ask for a little extra money up front to

conduct proper studies and avoid poor estimates that could take council by surprise.

McAuley responded by requesting that a drainage assessment be done in that section of the municipality. Staff encountered a severe lack of outlets when converting ditches to storm drains in Innisfil's growth area, he said.

"When you look at a piece of road this big costing over a million dollars you see why there's such a backlog," Cookstown

councillor Lynn Dollin told the approximately 15 residents on hand. "Because a piece of road costing this much would make you think it should be paved in gold."

Despite the jump in price and extended wait, town council plans to go ahead with the project.

"I think this particular case is a little bit out of our control, unfortunately," said Mayor Brian Jackson. "Council has not backed away from this and intends to move forward."

Innisfil Hydro to launch electricity retrofit incentive program

A seminar presentation will demonstrate how program can help local businesses incorporate conservation targets.

Join Innisfil Hydro at Georgian Downs as they promote the Electricity Retrofit Incentive Program (ERIP).

This unique conservation program aims to help the industrial, commercial, institutional and agricultural sectors leverage energy conservation and load management opportunities.

Incentives for sustainable, measurable and verifiable energy retrofits result in on-peak demand savings and/or annual energy savings.

The breakfast seminar takes place at Georgian Downs, 7485 - 5th Sideroad, Innisfil, on Thursday, Sept. 27, 8 to 10 a.m.

St. James United Bazaar

St. James United Church Annual "Autumnfest Bazaar" takes place Saturday, Nov. 3, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., 2230 Victoria St. W., Stroud. Free admission and parking.

The is a Tea Room: 9-10 a.m., Muffin & Coffee/Tea \$1. Lunch is 11:30-1:30 for \$5, Craft Sale, Baking, Pickles & Preserves, Homemade Candy.

Sukkot party

Barrie's Am Shalom Synagogue has a special Sukkot Service led by Audrey Kaufman on Sunday, Sept. 30, 11:00 a.m. followed by a Sukkot Party.

For information, call 705.792.3949 or visit the website www.amshalom.ca

Lieutenant Governor "good if you have money"

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"I don't think that it ever has been," McKibbin commented. "It's just a useless bureaucrat, a remnant of the old monarchy."

"I believe it is, because we are still part of the Commonwealth," Morrison replied, adding her feelings go back to the loyalist roots of her husband.

"Oh yes," Munro replied. "I think that a constitutional monarchy is a good thing."

She added it allows for people of a certain stature to offer their services.

"We've had some really outstanding Ontarians recognized in this way," she said, citing the examples of Pauline McKibbin and Lincoln Alexander. "The people who have been chosen to be the vice-Regal representatives have been people who have been appropriately role models in the community."

Reeves commented that in a democracy, it's useful to have a non-elected figurehead to handle ceremonial duties, adding it

takes possible political influence away from these functions.

How do you plan to vote in the referendum on electoral reform?

"Positively," Carvalho said. "Electoral reform will help smaller parties like our own."

"I see value in MMP (mixed member proportional), but I will probably go with first past the post, unless someone changes my mind between now and October the 10th," Gilbank said. "I like the simplicity of it and I like the personal attention between voters and elected officials that we have with first past the post. That gets lost when we have a list that is made up far away from the voters."

McKibbin said he would probably vote against MMP. "It seems like it's going to create a lot of extra bureaucracy," he remarked.

"I'm in support of anything that makes a fair government to ensure everybody's voice is heard," Morrison said, adding if enough people vote for a particular party, that party should be represented in the legislature.

"Against," Munro said. "We're talking about

reducing the number of elected representatives to 90," she pointed out, meaning the average riding would have an additional 30-to-40,000 people in it. She added a level of public accountability and scrutiny is important, but under the MMP system that's been proposed, there would be 39 MMPs with their loyalties directed at only their parties.

"I just don't see it as a step forward," she said. "Democracy is all about one person, one vote. It's not about special interest groups."

"It's rarely been brought up," Reeves commented.

He added he'll be voting in favour of the MMP proposal, as he pointed out society has changed over the years, with people becoming more aware through the internet, etc.

"The Green party is a grass-roots party," he added. "We need more influence."

"I think you'll end up with slightly more consensus decisions," he added.

Reeves did say he would like to see a sunset clause added to the system,

meaning it should be reviewed at some point, either by parliament or through a referendum, to

make sure it provides what the electorate wants.

Editor's note

The following are questions that were put to declared candidates over the previous two weeks, before Libertarian Caley McKibbin had announced he was running. These questions have been put to him because it was thought his responses would be of interest to the voters. But they were posed after the other candidates' answers had appeared in print. Thus the McKibbin might have been able to read the previous responses, an advantage his opponents did not have.

What is the proper rate for provincial sales tax?

"The less the better," McKibbin said.

Does the Greenbelt legislation work?

"I don't think government has a history of protecting the environment at all, so no," McKibbin observed.

Would you support reinstating photo radar?

"No," McKibbin said, "I don't think that it's the proper approach to the road problems."

Are MMPs appropriately paid?

"It seems to me they get paid much too much," McKibbin said.

How safe is Ontario's drinking water?

"Anybody can buy completely fresh and perfect safe drinking water. It's just the government's drinking water that's not very good," McKibbin commented.

"I drink bottled water." Would you support legislation banning the use of cell phones by people while they are driving?

"No," McKibbin commented, adding there are already motivations in place to

encourage people not to cause damage. "It's superfluous."

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