

Labourers blamed for rec centre delays

By Chris Simon

A two month Roofers Union strike and the replacement of several contracted labour companies are being blamed for the nearly seven months of anticipated construction delays at the Innisfil Recreation Complex, says a representative for the site's operations manager.

Gary Stanhope, from MFPM Property Managers, says the company is disappointed with the performance of several labourers originally hired for the construction of the \$29-million

recreation complex.

"There have been a number of delays on the project," he said, during a report to council last week. "We had originally hoped to be finished by now. But we can really look at three different items that have caused the delays."

Specifically, contracted painting companies have been replaced three separate times. But other factors, like the weather, have also played a role in the delay, he said.

"The roofers strike that occurred last year was very

effective to our project; we were just starting the roof," said Stanhope. "We've had some weather problems, which certainly has played into it. Unfortunately, we've had trouble with coordination with our general contractor and some of the more important trades. Some of the trades have actually had to be replaced. They have not performed; they did not do the work within the schedule they were supposed to. In some cases, they've been replaced more than once."

Construction on the

recreation centre is now expected to be complete by mid-July, with the entire complex fully operational in August. The outdoor sports fields could even be open by late spring, assuming weather conditions are good, he said.

"We're hoping that by August we'll have the full pool facility open to the public, we're hopeful the sports fields will be available in late May," said Stanhope. "If it's not too wet, we can start laying sod. Don't be surprised if within the next few weeks, you see all the lights go up

around the soccer pitches."

The complex was originally scheduled for completion in November. However, only the centre's two ice rinks have been completed so far. Once finished, the recreation centre will also feature an aquatics facility, gymnasium, fitness room, and community space.

Stanhope says both the recreation centre and Town Hall are running on budget. The \$10 million town hall will open early next month, said Stanhope.

Construction crews are putting the final touches on

the town hall, and are currently installing furniture and lighting on site.

The town hall will have several upgrades over the current administration building. It will include handicap accessible council chambers with a 150 seat public gallery, three community meeting rooms, and a customer service centre near the front entrance. The third floor of the building will contain 1,000 square feet of extra space, which could be leased out to private business owners until the town needs to expand its offices.

Chamber hosting awards gala

On Feb. 22, the Greater Innisfil Chamber of Commerce will recognize Innisfil's outstanding individuals and businesses at its annual Awards Night Gala. This is the premier event on the chamber's calendar and

tickets always sell out quickly.

To accommodate growing demand and our rapidly expanding membership, this year the gala will be held in the Mutuel Hall at Georgian Downs.

Highlighted by this year's Carnivale theme, gala attendees will enjoy a lavish dinner, dancing and live entertainment, and numerous door prizes. We will make use of the huge stage that is the focal point of the venue's

entertainment programs for both the gala's live entertainment and business awards.

Those awards include recognition for service, manufacturing/industrial, marketing and promotion, community, Entrepreneur of the

Year, New Business of the Year and Business of the Year.

OLG Slots at Georgian Downs, Sandy Cove Acres, Al Jones Freedom 55 Financial, Lefroy Harbour Resorts, Peoples Credit

Union, Pearson-McCuaig Engineering Ltd., Weed Man, Town of Innisfil EDC, NT Temps, Scotiabank, Spherion, BDC, and Pet Country Estate have all helped support the awards gala.

Barrie Hydro conserving power

Several of Barrie Hydro Distribution Inc. (Barrie Hydro) conservation programs have resulted in impressive results. The programs — created to reduce energy consumption and peak demand — provided customers with various means to reduce their consumption during summer peak, throughout the year and into the future with ongoing energy savings.

This past summer, Barrie Hydro and the Ontario Power Authority asked residential customers to take the challenge of reducing their consumption by 10 per cent over the months of July and

August through the Summer Savings Program.

"We are pleased to report that over 21 per cent of eligible customers reduced consumption by at least 10 per cent compared to last summer. The average customer rebate, as a result of these energy savings, was \$18.95. The conservation efforts of these customers resulted in a reduction in consumption of more than four million kilowatt hours and we certainly applaud them for their commitment to conservation," said Mark Henderson, president and CEO of Barrie Hydro.

Customers have also dis-

posed of 497 refrigerators, 209 freezers and 18 window air conditioners through the Refrigerator Roundup program. This is in addition to over 800 refrigerators collected during Barrie Hydro's Refrigerator Retirement pilot program run in 2006, representing approximately 986,000 kWh in customer savings annually.

Barrie Hydro has also helped replace 857 old inefficient refrigerators and 27 dishwashers in various Barrie Municipal Non-Profit Housing Corporation residences throughout the last two years.

It is estimated that BMN-

PHC and their tenants could see combined savings of as much as 650,000 kWh per year because of this initiative. Working with the City of Barrie, Barrie Hydro has assisted in funding the conversion of the traffic signal lights throughout the city to new, more efficient Light Emitting Diode technology. These LED signals not only last longer, reducing maintenance costs, but there is also a large savings in the amount of power they consume. Based on the conversions to date, the Barrie expects to save 1.1 million kWh annually with the new lights. This represents a savings on their

energy bill of approximately \$100,000 annually.

Barrie Hydro continues to be a leader in conservation initiatives and this is demonstrated by their interest in solar thermal water heating, a source of renewable energy. The residential scaled panel installed at their 55 Patterson Road office location in February 2007, complete with an interactive LCD display panel in their main lobby, has produced the equivalent of 4,242 kWh of renewable energy since last March.

The energy produced is essentially equal to the water heating energy needs of a

family of four.

"This demonstration has been designed to provide our customers with quantifiable data about the types of savings available to them through the application of this technology," said Henderson. "Our conservation efforts are part of an overall provincial initiative to create a culture of conservation, to meet the supply challenges we face in the future. We thank our customers for their support as we continue working together to achieve this goal."

For more information, call 722-7222 or visit www.barriehydro.com.

Essa bridge named after former reeve

By Richard Blanchard

The bridge under construction on Essa townships' 5th Line, north of Nicolston, will be named after a former Essa Township reeve.

Council gave approval last week to name the bridge after the ER Whiteside bridge, after Ross Whiteside.

Whiteside, who served at various times on Essa council from the 1969 to 1985 as a councillor, deputy reeve and reeve.

He was also appointed as Simcoe County warden in

1984.

Whiteside's farm was located on the 5th Concession, where he farmed for many years.

A plaque will be installed on the bridge identifying it by name.

It will also include the bridge contractor, consulting engineer, all members of council, the clerk, treasurer, roads supervisor and CAO/Public Works Manager.

The bridge is expected to be completed this spring.

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