

King seeks additional councillor at York Region

By Angela Gismondi

Mayor Steve Pellegrini thinks King needs an additional voice at York Regional Council.

At its meeting on May 6 King council passed a resolution to request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing to enact a regulation that would authorize the Region of York to change the size of regional council to add one additional member from the Township of King. They asked that the change in size of regional council be in place for the 2014 election.

A similar resolution was made last June at York Regional Council to add a regional councillor for the municipalities who don't currently have one including Aurora, East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville and King Township plus one additional member for the City of Vaughan. That motion failed.

Now, the City of Vaughan is bringing a motion to regional council in which they are requesting an additional member be added for Vaughan. Because the motion doesn't include the other municipalities, it is considered a different motion. Mayor Pellegrini now wants to do the same.

“Our motion was about King having a voice,” said Pellegrini. “I take pride in the fact that I've never missed a council or committee meeting but I don't sit on every committee, I can't sit on all of them. What happens if I'm away and King doesn't have a voice and that's not fair.”

At the regional level Pellegrini currently sits on the finance and administration committee, the Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance and Environmental Services.

“It would be nice if we had another representative from this municipality to sit in other meetings,” said Pellegrini. “It would benefit King to have a voice at these meetings.”

He is not optimistic that the motion will be supported.

“I'm not holding my breath for it to pass at the region,” said Pellegrini adding the motion needs a two-thirds majority in order to be approved and then would have to be approved at the provincial level. “It's definitely worth a try.”

Pellegrini noted the additional regional representative would not cost taxpayers a penny since there would effectively be the same number of people at the municipal council table. What he hopes to do is adjust the ward boundaries and create five wards in King instead of six. The additional representative would be a regional councillor and deputy mayor.

He also pointed out that the criteria for a regional councillor is that the population of the municipality is 50,000.

“If that's the case, King will never get an additional representative at the region,” said Pellegrini.

The motion is on the May 16 regional council agenda but is not expected to be discussed at the meeting. Pellegrini himself is on a mission trip to China.