

Future of the Schomberg arena

I was pleased to see and read the report of the Parks and Recreation Department on the creative re-use of the old Schomberg arena, and I do take note of Mayor Pellegrini's comments that the property should be saved while, for the right re-use, the building may be replaceable.

Having said that, there are some inherent problems with re-purposing the Schomberg arena building and lands for a seniors' care facility.

I would separate the question in to a three-tier process; the first is simply having unique low maintenance independent living units for those seniors who wish to stay in King and can live and survive independently, which frankly can be built anywhere. The second tier would be for those seniors who require a certain level of assistance, but for the most part can function well without assistance. The third tier is for those seniors who require full service care and attention.

In my view the first two tiers are easily achievable in just about any location within King Township, assuming cooperation of the municipality. In point of fact I have, for a group of individuals, prepared a draft conceptual plan which allows for the construction of a communal facility for tier 1 and tier 2 seniors, which includes a full-time nurse and visiting doctor 6 hours per week, which could be constructed for less than \$250,000 per tenant, and have a maintenance cost (inclusive of salaries, utilities and taxes) of less than \$1,200 per month.

Unfortunately, the land value associated with the Schomberg arena and lands would increase the estimated costs by about \$50,000 per tenant, which may or may not be acceptable.

The third tier of care ??that is full service medical attention ? requires a great deal of cooperation from various levels of government, and incurs tremendous expenses. If this were achievable within King Township, I suspect the timing may put it years down the road. And quite frankly, any developer who took on the task would likely price the facility considerably higher with allowance for reasonable (whatever those may be) profits.

While from a political perspective it may be desirable to consider a full service seniors' facility, I don't believe it's realistic to consider the same for the old Schomberg arena and property.

Jeff Laidlaw