

Residents push for improvements in Nobleton

By Mark Pavilons

Much-needed improvements are coming to Nobleton.

But the public needs to be patient as wants, needs, budgets and timing all have to be taken into consideration.

Traffic lights, sidewalks and beautification of the village were all front and centre during the first 'Meet the Mayor & Ward Councillors' night, held last week at the Nobleton Library.

Mayor Steve Pellegrini joined Councillors David Boyd and Linda Pabst to listen to citizen concerns, and offer updates on important projects and issues.

More than a dozen engaged residents asked pointed questions and were given honest answers by their elected officials.

A couple of residents pushed hard for traffic lights at the intersection of Greenside and King Road, which would offer some traffic relief for the nearby subdivision. It's been an issue for years and given the increased volume of traffic, it's become a safety issue.

Boyd said York Region is studying traffic volumes at this intersection throughout February and will report back to the Township whether it meets current warrants. Once King has the information, they will review it. Hopes are it will meet regional warrants and the \$250,000 tab will be picked up by the Region.

'We're trying to get something going,' Boyd stressed.

Traffic along King Road was another issue. Mayor Pellegrini pointed out York Region will begin work on intersection improvements at Weston, the 7th and 8th Concessions, along with a 'slip lane' (left turn lane) at the 11th Concession. All of these will help traffic flow along this busy commuter road.

The mayor pointed out it's a Regional road and as such, takes the pressure off of local roads. Previous Township councils have asked for bypasses around both Nobleton and King City, all to no avail. The proposed east-west corridor (or 413) would take the load off of these roads, but the province put the project on hold recently.

Boyd pointed out York Regional Police can be quite effective when it comes to traffic enforcement. He urged residents to fill in community safety reports on YRP's website (similar to Road Watch). Here, you can express concerns about motorists and problem areas. YRP can respond with more enforcement and even truck blitzes.

One woman said she'd love to go to the YRP's website, but she's doesn't have high-speed Internet, like many rural residents.

Pellegrini said this is not just an issue in King, but across York. He sits on a regional task force that is examining broadband Internet access and looking for solutions.

Just recently, King council heard from Vianet, which is proposing a \$3.3-million high-speed fibre cable running along Jane Street, providing roughly 1,000 homes with this valuable service.

Mayor Pellegrini said they are also making it mandatory that any new construction that occurs includes laying empty conduits, to pave the way for such services in the future.

The mayor told residents the Township is 'spending lots of money in Nobleton.'

With the passing of the 2016 budget, Township councillors and staff made a commitment to infrastructure, roads, sidewalks and village beautification.

He did point out that they prioritize matters across the Township, since residents in every area have their own wants and needs.

The Township has also moved forward in preparing the former Holy Name School lands for its future municipal office. They passed an amendment to the zoning bylaw and hired property managers to get the ball rolling. Hopes are the site will be ready by the end of 2017 or early 2018. While expensive (pegged at upwards of \$13 million), much of the cost will be offset by the sale of the current municipal building and strip mall in King City.

The revamped zoning bylaw for Nobleton is nearing completion and citizen input is vital in its content. Nobleton will see some changes in the next 2-5 years, including the development of the former wrecking yard; Highway 27 and King Road intersection improvements; development on the Hambley House property and village beautification.

When asked about taxes and Township spending efficiencies, Mayor Pellegrini noted they try to be as effective and efficient as possible with every decision they make. He also 'wants the best taxes possible ...' While each year's budget contains small tax hikes, it's often necessary to maintain services and address infrastructure needs.

When asked about water quality, the mayor told the crowd local water is 100% safe. It may contain some metals, but it's perfectly safe. Councillor Pabst noted she drinks water from the tap, saying it's 'wonderful water.'

Boyd noted the Township is spending more money on watermain repairs.

The next Meet the Mayor & Ward Councillors event will take place Wednesday, March 23 at the Schomberg Library, running 6:30

to 8 p.m. Councillor Bill Cober will join Mayor Pellegrini for the informal community discussion.