

Made in York housing solutions dealing with rental housing issue

By Wallace Pidgeon

York Region Council has recently approved and moved forward on a number of housing solutions to find ways to bring more rental units to communities across the Region.

Regional Councillors and staff have identified rental housing needs as an impediment to economic growth and affordability for low and moderate income individuals.

The 'Make Rent Happen' campaign steered by John Taylor, Regional Councillor for Newmarket and York Region's Co-Chair of Human Services Planning Board recently championed a pilot project that will see a 180 unit private rental apartment complex built on Davis Drive in Newmarket.

Rents will be in the neighbourhood of \$1,000.00 per month and built by Malter Holdings Limited, a private developer where development charges are deferred for 20 years enabling the company to build the much needed rental housing.

Unlike the \$1,400.00 per month average for condo rentals referred at Regional Council these rental units are to appeal to everyone from seniors, to youth, to daycare workers, and people who work in the retail market who cannot afford to own their own home.

This is just one of the ways York Regional Council is finding made in York housing solutions to address the lack of rental housing. 'I think it's a great idea,' explained Aurora Mayor Geoffrey Dawe. 'There is a huge lack of rental property in Aurora and York Region.'

To Mayor Dawe, this is the right step for York Region and a Newmarket solution.

'If we want to talk about affordable housing then we have to step up and say here are the things we have to, if we just want to talk about affordable housing and not take any action, then that's just politicking,' he added. 'I'm glad that Newmarket is doing this and there was unanimous support around the table. I think it's a well-supported idea.'

But, do not expect a made in Newmarket solution for Aurora.

'Certainly nothing in the short term, that's not what is envisioned,' he continued. 'If you look at where it is going in Newmarket, it's going along Davis Drive, it's being rebuilt along with the rapid transit.'

Here in Aurora, there is a plan for a 34-unit private apartment rental building to be built just east of Yonge and Wellington. This is a different made in York solution for Aurora.

'And that's where you would look at situating high density, whether it's condos or apartments or whatever it is, rental or purchase,' said Mayor Dawe. 'You are going to typically, in our case, put it on Yonge Street because that is where the rapid transit is going to go through, that makes the most logic, you're not going to stick it out at Bathurst and Wellington.'