

'Old World' mall studied for Clarkson

By JOHN STEWART
Times staff writer

A proposal for a prestige shopping mall, which could help revitalize the Clarkson Village business district, is being examined by businessmen and ratepayers.

Jack Friedman, the developer of the Village Square mall in Burlington, wants to put a similar commercial centre at the northwest corner of Lakeshore Road and Meadow Wood Road. He has presented his plans in a preliminary meeting with businessmen and residents and has met with city planning staff.

Although community spokesmen have nothing but praise for the concept of the mall, they fear there could be problems because of commercial encroachment down Meadow Wood Road.

Friedman's plan would create a type of "old world" effect by use of a square of small stores. In the central courtyard, which features

cobblestone walkways and old fashioned lanterns in narrow streets, there would be a central architectural focus, a "church-like" structure.

The commercial floorspace, likely less than 25,000 square feet, would be leased to operators. There would be no fast-food outlets, or franchise operations of any kind allowed because Friedman says "they'd be totally inconsistent with what we have in mind." He foresees at least one, perhaps two small restaurants.

Don Clarkson, the president of the Council of South Mississauga Community Associations (CSMCA) which represents 14 ratepayers' groups finds the concept "exciting" and thinks residents will also be enthusiastic. "But I don't know how excited they'll be about the parking encroaching down Meadow Wood Road."

Parking isn't the only problem. The development would cover three lots, two at the

corner now owned by Bruce Caton and his wife and a property to the south owned by Denis Veal.

Between the Veal and Caton property is a walkway which has always been considered the last line of defence between the potential commercial development and the residential community.

William Kent, past president of the Meadow Wood Rattray ratepayers finds the proposal, in his personal view "just what we ought to be interested in" for Clarkson's revitalization. But he doesn't know how residents will react to the parking and driveway arrangements envisioned by Friedman.

The Caton property, originally the site of the Blue Dragon Inn, also presents a technical problem. "One of the lots is designated for Clarkson Village commercial use under a recently passed city zoning bylaw, but the

other is designated as residential, to protect the community to the south. However, it was agreed earlier that any viable commercial proposal would also be examined. At that time, it wasn't contemplated that development further south of the existing walkway would be considered, however.

Friedman has unsuccessfully tried to purchase an empty Gulf station beside the Caton property which could provide the necessary parking.

Fred Schuringa, president of the Clarkson Businessmen's Association, calls the mall proposal "excellent", adding that "any type of redevelopment like that will upgrade the other businesses as well."

Following Friedman's recent presentation to the CSMCA and the business association president, it was agreed that all groups would consult with their individual associations and meet again with Friedman in mid-January.

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MPP probes kids centre

If there is any evidence of corporal punishment at the Meadowvale Childrens' Centre operated by the Bible Baptist Church "the government plain won't tolerate it," says Mississauga North MPP Terry Jones.

Jones said Friday that he will be speaking to Minister of Community and Social Services Keith Norton about suggestions that teachers aren't qualified as they should be at the Meadowvale centre where nursery, day care and pre-school and after-school services are offered.

The centre opened last May with a one-year licence. Dr. Betty Graham, district director of the Ministry of Social Services has recommended to the province that the centre's licence be extended only until the end of March at which time it will be required that evidence be produced showing instructors at the centre have adequate training to meet Ontario standards.

The province normally requires a certificate in early childhood training for instructors in facilities licensed under the Day

Nurseries Act. Most of the instructors at the Meadowvale Centre have received diplomas from Baptist schools in Canada and the United States.

The Childrens' Centre was asked to show proof that its instructors have equivalent training to Ontario requirements when their original licence was issued last May but have still not complied, Dr. Graham said. The centre has a valid licence at the moment but it could be revoked by the Ministry.

Dr. Graham has received only one complaint about the centre, from teacher Carol Dykes who visited the operation and claimed that children were required to sit in one place for extended periods of time, were punished by being denied food, were made to walk in the halls with their hands over their mouths, were taught phonics incorrectly, were given improper materials for lessons and weren't given the required periods of physical activity. Mrs. Dykes withdrew her son from the centre when he appeared afraid to attend.

MPP Jones says he doesn't necessarily agree that a specific certificate is required to teach in day care centres but he will ensure that the instructors at the centre have adequate qualifications.

As for allegations that children had their mouths taped shut and that at least one child was taped to a wall as a disciplinary measure, Jones said such behavior was totally unacceptable.

Reverend William Hirtz of Bible Baptists Church says an instructor who was accused of taking improper disciplinary measures is no longer with the centre. Reverend Hirtz didn't admit any such incidents took place.

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