

# York sells land for big bucks

by ELAN KATTSIR

**A**fter a five-hour marathon session and strong opposition from local residents, North York City Council approved the sale of 22 acres of York University's land to Bramalea for development.

The joint York-Bramalea Limited submission for a 1,573 apartment project on the southern portion of the campus was approved by a nine to six vote last Wednesday.

Ron Hunt, Director for the York University Development Corporation (YUDC) said, "We're quite pleased. We've been working 15 months for this." The money from the project will provide the seed money for York's \$100 million expansion program announced last October. The program is intended to alleviate the 1.2 million square foot space deficiency currently hamper-

ing the York community.

The university will receive an estimated \$50 million for the land.

"We are desperately short of everything a university needs. We have no choice. The lack of money is frustrating our growth as a university," said York's president Harry Arthurs.

But an estimated 600 local residents attending the meeting disagreed with Hunt's "converting one asset for another asset" assessment of the deal.

"We're not attempting to kill the project, but to delay it in order to have integrated planning" prior to its approval, said University City Community Association (UCCA) member Lee d'Anjou.

UCCA Political Action Committee chairman Norman Kelly said that UCCA, recognizing York's need for money, isn't against development on

York land, but the proposed project will have a negative influence on the community, in clear violation of an earlier agreement made between North York residents, York University and Bramalea which stated that any nonacademic development must have a positive influence on the community.

"Council already decided before the meeting," said Kelly.

Local Metro Councillor Maria Augimeri was not only disappointed with Council's decision, but with the proceedings. She says many councillors didn't even bother to listen to local residents and a few councillors made discourteous comments to some residents.

The proposed project still requires the approval of Metro Council which is expected to vote on the submission by the fall.

# U of T student pleads guilty to exam scam

by ELAN KATTSIR

**A** student hired to write a York computer exam pleaded guilty to "personation at examination" in provincial court on Tuesday May 30. He received a conditional discharge, was placed on a six-month probation and ordered to complete 100 hours of community service.

Judge C.J. Morrison agreed with the crown counsel and defense attorney, R. Byrnes, that Woon Cheong Tam, a U of T graduate and former York student, should not be given a criminal record, but he warned that cheating on university exams is a serious offense.

The maximum penalty for personation at examination is six months in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

The York student who hired Tam, Terence Yick, was earlier reprimanded more severely, receiving a suspended sentence, a year of probation and fifty hours of community service.

Shirley Katz, associate dean of arts at York, said she accepts the way the court has chosen to deal with the matter. She feels there is a general deterrence value in the judgment.

U of T vice-provost David Cook said that going through the court system should serve as a general deterrent and that the situation has been taken "under advisement" for possible academic reprimands. Although U of T's jury system can hand out a range of penalties, such an offense usually warrants a suspension, said Cook.

Katz did not reveal Yick's academic punishment, but said "students who have themselves been or consent to be impersonators usually have a suspension for a determined

period of time . . . We can't have academic degrees devalued."

Tam and Yick never actually met. Yick's roommate, identified only as William, arranged the deal. Yick gave William \$300 in advance for the man who was to impersonate him and an additional \$450 on the day of the exam.

Tam panicked when the exam questions were different from those he expected, said the crown attorney, but Tam's attorney argued that the cheater panicked when he recognized a former lecturer.

A proctor's suspicions were raised when Tam left the exam early. Tam was identified through a bank card he left behind. He also left \$500.

Katz hopes that photographic identification cards for purposes of examinations, expected to be in operation in the next academic year, will help to control such cheating. Cook said that the U of T faculties using such identification cards have enjoyed some success with them.

# Service charged with forgery

by DANIEL WOLGELERENTER

**F**orgery charges have been laid against a downtown essay writing service that has supplied students across Canada with what it calls "research material."

Husband and wife Derek and Elizabeth Sim were charged on May 29 with conspiracy to utter a forged document and seven counts of uttering a forged document. The owners of the Collier St. Custom Essay Service appeared the same day in provincial court and were released on \$500 bail. The date for a preliminary hearing will be set July 11.

Each count carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

The charges come after a nine-month investigation that began in September. Last April, York officials — with the support of the Council of Ontario Universities — approached police at Metro 31 Division to investigate the firm after a student submitted an essay that was suspected to be from a commercial service.

The Metro fraud squad had previously investigated the firm but never laid charges.

Police seized the company's records in April and discovered that students from Ontario, Quebec, and Saskatchewan have used the service. The names of army personnel and high school students were also in the files.

Constable Graham Hanlon of 31 Division said that students would not be criminally charged but "the possibility exists that some writers may be charged."

Barry Fox, the lawyer representing the Sims, said the firm has been operating for 10 years and that this is the first time anyone has been charged for preparing "research material." He also questioned the decision not to charge students.

"If you charge the person who aided and abetted an act then you should charge the person who committed the act," he said. "Without the students, there would be no aiding and abetting."

At York and U of T, universities that both complied with police requests to withhold essays from students pending completion of the investigation, academic investigations are underway.

York spokesperson Jessie May Rowntree said that a number of students have been charged with cheating after suspected students were interviewed by officials of their faculty. She added that a number of hearings before academic committees have also been scheduled.

Under York Senate guidelines, penalties for cheating can result in failure in a course, suspension, or the withholding or revoking of degree.

U of T vice-provost David Cook said that no academic charges have yet been laid but that faculty deans are still interviewing students.

At Western, four students have received failing grades for handing in Custom essays. Ten other students may face a similar fate pending completion of the school's investigation.

## correction

In the May 25 issue of *Excalibur*, Debbie Kee was misquoted in the article "New fire route for campus." It should have said, "All vehicular traffic in front of Ross will be permanently eliminated by the construction of the Entry Pavillion and the new Academic Building."

"The construction will likely be conducted in three phases so that some degree of pedestrian access will be maintained."

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