

Public meeting set for Shelburne budget

Shelburne council will hold a public meeting on Nov. 25 to present the draft of its 2014 budget, in which it will show that it will hold to the 2013 tax rate but that the same tax rate will generate an approximate rise of five per cent in revenues.

Because of the town's growth, however, the rise in revenue does not mean a corresponding rise in property tax. Assessments on existing properties have not risen by five per cent.

Treasurer Carol Sweeney says the "spread" on existing homes is 1.9%, according to estimates by the Municipal Property Assessment Corp. (MPAC). This would mean a 1.9% rise in the actual property tax on an average existing home.

Ms. Sweeney pointed out in an interview, however, that draft budgets typically begin higher than the finished ones.

She said, following the public meeting on the 25th, the council would make whatever changes it feels are appropriate. The unspoken message was that the council would be striving to achieve a zero increase in taxes although Councillor Randy Chambers, chair of the finance committee, indicated at an earlier meeting that the draft had been completed with sharp pencils.

Whatever the case, it might be difficult accurately to predict how much new assessment will be coming on stream in the next 12 months.

It seems a certainty that there will be a Tim Hortons at Wigglesworth Plaza in 2014. But zoning for the major commercial development to the east, Shelburne Market Village, is under appeal by Loblaw Companies.

Residential development in the two major subdivisions, on Highway 10 and on County Road 124, is proceeding apace, however.

Each building permit issued generates a Development Charge for the town in addition to the property taxes paid after completion.

By Wes Keller