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Township looking at former Holy Name school property

By Mark Pavilons

The Township of King is keeping an eye on the former Holy Name elementary school site in King City.

It's a prime spot for redevelopment, since the school was relocated and the property deemed surplus by the York Catholic District School Board.

The roughly 10-acre parcel houses the 36,000-square-foot school with access to King Road. It's nestled in a private locale, the bulk of which is zoned environmentally sensitive.

According to Mayor Steve Pellegrini, Township staff and councillors discussed purchasing the property in closed session.

The Township is given first rights on the property and officials are contemplating the idea.

Negotiations have been ongoing between the Township and board, but they are not close on the price. The mayor noted only 3-4 acres of the site are usable, so they're basing their criteria and price range based on the usable table land.

The benefit would be that this parcel would be in the control of the Township and be used for either a new municipal office and/or joint use.

?It's a great opportunity to partner and provide more than just government offices,??Pellegrini said.

He doesn't want the Township to miss such an opportunity, but admits they are only prepared to spend so much.

Government needs to be more business-like and make smart investments, he pointed out.

To that end, in all likelihood, the Township would sell the existing plaza in King City and use that money towards the new site. In this regard, the Township would be helping to implement commercial change and putting its money where its mouth is ??helping to shape the commercial portion of the village core.

The fact is, the Township and its staff have outgrown the existing building, which totals some 14,000 square feet. The old Holy Name school is more than double that.

King CAO?Susan Plamondon said the board is following the process by letting government agencies know about the land, and giving them an opportunity to consider it.

Any time a municipality is given an opportunity to purchase land that's in public possession, they should take a look at it, she said, adding staff is evaluating the site and will make its recommendation to council.

The separate board wouldn't comment on the discussions.

?We are following the provincially mandated disposal regulation with regards to the disposal of the surplus lands in King Township. We are in the middle of that process and we cannot comment until the process is completed,? according to May Moore, board communications manager.