



1990: Plans for mega mall approved

Jim Quantrell, At a Glance

February 24, 2010

Cambridge archivist Jim Quantrell takes readers back for a glance at events from 10, 15 and 20 years ago.

20 years ago: Fourth week of Feb. 1990

Site plans were approved by the city's planning committee for a \$70-million mega mall to be built on land east of Hespeler Road between Pinebush Road and Highway 401. That decision cleared the way for final approval by council the following week. A spokesperson for the developer suggested that the sod would likely be turned on the project by late summer or early fall with completion of the first phase expected by the spring or summer of 1992. The first phase was to include a 479,929-square-foot regional shopping centre anchored by Eaton's, Sears and Zellers stores.

The "battle for Blair" was to be put on hold for another month when the city's planning committee decided to give local developers more time to review the city's recommendations on future development in the area. The city's planning department had recently unveiled its long awaited study of development pressures in Blair and had recommended that all new growth in the tiny rural hamlet be blocked until a comprehensive land-use review of the area, include water supply and sewage services, could be undertaken. In the meantime city staff was recommending that four subdivisions already proposed for Blair, with a total of 179 homes, be refused.

Plans were unveiled for the refurbishment of an old stone industrial building on the banks of the Grand River just south of the intersection of Water and Concession Streets. The vacant and garishly painted "Leo the Lion" textile outlet at the corner of Water and Concession Streets was to be demolished but the older stone building behind it was to be retained and given new life. Plans for the revitalized building made use of the new floodwall being built on the riverbank by the Grand River Conservation Authority to support a cantilevered atrium at the rear of the building.

15 years ago: Fourth week of Feb. 1995

It was possible that Waterloo Region's francophone students might soon have a French language high school in Cambridge if the Waterloo Region Separate School Board approved a recommendation by the French-language section to purchase a parcel of land and a portable school. The Ministry of Education had already preapproved spending of up to \$1.7-million for an eight-hectare site owned by the province on Maple Grove Road at Fountain Street. At the time there were 550 francophone students attending the board's French language schools but the closest French language high school was J. P. Vanier in Hamilton. According to reports the board spent \$400,000 annually to send students there.

10 years ago: Fourth week of Feb. 2000

Cambridge Centre was the site of an open house to update the public on the region's current water situation and to outline the long-term strategy to meet the region's water needs for the next 40 to 50 years. At the time the water system capacity for the region was about 57 million gallons a day, however, it was estimated that 67 million gallons would be required daily by 2041 and prior to that the region's demand would outstrip the local water supply. The water services division at the region anticipated that additional water supply would have to be in place by 2018. No fewer than 16 different options had been evaluated by the region and a list of three had been developed. Under consideration were finding fresh well water, an aquifer storage and recover system and a pipeline to either Lake Huron or Lake Erie.

The city was about to strike a special subcommittee to develop a bylaw governing the use of municipal cemeteries. The proposal came out of a public services meeting where Heritage Cambridge convinced the committee to set aside a staff recommendation that would restrict the use of city cemeteries to daytime use for educational, historical and theatrical purposes. The controversy surrounding how the city's cemeteries could be used was sparked the previous fall by Heritage Cambridge's Spirit Walk, an evening event that would have used Mount View Cemetery as the backdrop for a historical presentation featuring characters from the community's past. Organizers had worked with city staff to set up the event but when a member of the public objected the

question of whether to hold the event went to council. In the end the event moved across Blenheim Road to Victoria Park where it enjoyed a successful run.

Jim Quantrell, archivist, City of Cambridge Archives

46 Dickson St. Cambridge (519) 740-4680 ext. 4610

quantrellj@city.cambridge.on.ca

This article is for personal use only courtesy of CambridgeTimes.ca - a division of Metroland Media Group Ltd.
