

# Councillors nix doubling fees

Development rates for a single-family residence in London would have jumped cent from \$5,257 to \$7,938.

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London will continue to have the lowest development fees of any major city in the province, city council has decided.

Council voted 15-4 Monday to quash a consultant's report recommending the fees be increased about 50 per cent. Council also turned down a proposal to begin charging fees on industrial development.

Controller Janet McEwen proposed the fees be increased \$100 to cover fire and transit services, parks and libraries. McEwen said it would establish the principle that developers must help finance the cost of expanding services. She said it would also quell the perception "council was in the back pocket of developers."

But Mayor Tom Gosnell said

any increase in development fees would cripple the development industry as it emerges from the recession.

**FOOL'S GAME:** Gosnell also said the city would be playing a "fool's game" if it increases development fees because it would allow the provincial government to cut back on funding.

Councillor Ted Wernham said McEwen's motion was "tokenism" which would only deceive the public.

Development charges were levied to cover expanding roads and sewers. A change in provincial law allows municipalities to collect development fees for "soft services" such as libraries, parks and recreation. A consultant's study has proposed development fees be increased by about 50 per cent from \$5,257 to \$7,938 for a single-family resi-



dence based on a projection of the cost of servicing new development.

Under provincial law, council is required to pass a revised by-law on such fees by Nov. 23.

## CHEYENNE APARTMENTS

Council formally authorized staff on Monday to work with the Cheyenne Tenants' Association to develop a pitch to persuade the province to help convert the troubled apartment complex to co-op housing.

Councillors expressed a willingness to help residents of 75, 85, 95 and 105 Cheyenne Ave. apartments but were reluctant to commit the city to funding the proposed conversion.

Several members of council said it was about time the city acted to help the group find funding to demolish or renovate the complex, which is overcrowded and in a run-down condition.

Controller Jack Burghardt said city staff will help the residents come up with a proposal aimed at prying some dollars from Queen's Park for co-op or non-profit housing. He said the bid was exploratory and does not commit the city to financially supporting the move. Conversion of the complex has been estimated at \$5 million.

## IN OTHER BUSINESS

□ Council agreed to recommend demolition of several buildings on Becher Street to make way for a high-rise apartment building. The developer, Talon Contracting Ltd., which is associated with Ellis-Don Construction, has appealed council's earlier refusal for the development to the Ontario Municipal Board.

□ Council rejected a proposal to permit homeowners to paint municipal numbers on the curbs outside their homes. Concerns were expressed the plan wasn't mandatory, wouldn't be relied upon and another bylaw would be necessary to address maintenance concerns.