

McDonald's opens second site on Henderson

By Wanda McConnell

A McDonald's Restaurant is slated to be built at the Northdale Shopping Centre.

Construction is expected to begin soon, with the opening scheduled for next spring, says Andy Bates, operations manager for McDonald's in Manitoba.

At least one area resident isn't happy to hear the news. Judy Judge says she's worried the new restaurant will just create more traffic in an already hazardous area. She also questions the need for yet more fast food eateries on Henderson, especially one so close to area schools.

The new restaurant will be located near John Henderson Junior High School. The existing McDonald's Restaurant on Henderson Highway is across from John Pritchard School. It won't be closing when the new McDonald's opens.

Judge says she was surprised the McDonald's application "slipped through" without people knowing about it.

"I was really stunned," she said. "There's a problem with the process. It doesn't seem right that something that's going to have such a big impact is based on small yellow signs."

Judge is referring to the yellow signs that must be posted at a site advertising the date of a public hearing for a development application for that site.

North Kildonan councillor Mark Lubosch said that as the applicant, McDonald's followed the proper process. He pointed out that because the land is zoned commercial, McDonald's has a right to build there.

However, because there will be a drive through, it needed special approval through a public hearing before the Board of

Adjustment.

McDonald's posted the yellow notices that referred to the public hearing. The hearing, held Oct. 10, was a chance for residents to oppose the application, Lubosch explains. There was no opposition and the application was approved.

"Whether you like McDonald's or not is a personal preference, but under our zoning bylaws, their being there is a permitted use," said Lubosch.

"These things have a way of working themselves out. When Taco Bell wanted to open across the street, there

was quite a kerfuffle. Now Tim Hortons is there with a drive through, and we haven't heard one complaint."

Lubosch added that the Board of Adjustment and the city's traffic department both study a development's site plan and put conditions on it to minimize traffic concerns.

Bates says the new restaurant will seat 100 people and will have a 550-square-foot playland. The drive through will have "face to face" service. Customers will give their orders directly to a person, rather than talking

through a speaker. That way, Bates says, sound doesn't carry and annoy neighbours.

Northdale Shopping Centre, at 979 Henderson Highway, has seen major redevelopment of late. A new IGA store and an upgraded Manitoba Liquor Commission has opened at the centre.

The former IGA store will be totally demolished and a new building will go up. Bachman Property Managers, who manage the site, aren't releasing any details about what will go into the new building.



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