

What do you think of the Town's name?

COUNCIL WANTS TO KNOW IF IT'S TIME TO JUST GO WITH "STOUFFVILLE"

"Whitchurch-Stouffville" or just "Stouffville?" Or maybe something else?

Those are the questions Council will be answering in December when they decide if it's time to quell confusion about our town's name.

And they want your opinion.

"Early next year, we will be beginning an extensive rebranding initiative, and we would like to know what the public thinks of the name 'Whitchurch-Stouffville' beforehand," said Glenn Jackson, Corporate Communications Officer with the Town and project lead. "Before we embark on the project, we need to know exactly what we are branding."

The Town has set up a series of open houses and launched an online survey to gauge exactly what the public thinks of the name.

Geographically speaking, "The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville" is the name of the lower-tier town (or "municipality") bounded by Davis Drive in the north, Highway 404 in the west, York-Durham Line in the east and approximately 200 metres north of 19th Avenue to the south.

"The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville" has been the name of the town since 1971 when the Township of Whitchurch amalgamated with the Community of Stouffville.

Whitchurch Township originally extended to Yonge Street in the west and contained parts of Aurora and Newmarket.

Stouffville, geographically speaking, is

the primary urban area within Whitchurch-Stouffville. It has the largest population and land area of all the settlement areas in the Town. Stouffville is roughly located south of Bethesda Sideroad and east of Highway 48 in the southeast part of Whitchurch-Stouffville. It was designated a 'Community' when the amalgamation occurred.

"There has been an element of confusion with the two names over the years - Whitchurch-Stouffville vs. Stouffville," Jackson says. "According to Canada Post, we all live in 'Stouffville.' Our federal and provincial ridings are named after 'Stouffville.' Our hospital is named after 'Stouffville.'"

A lot of that confusion is based on spelling, pronunciation and just people generally not knowing the difference between the two locations, Jackson said.

"Being in Communications, I see this a lot," he said. "Frequent misspellings and mispronunciations of not only the word 'Whitchurch,' but of the word 'Stouffville,' is fairly common."

"'Whitchurch' is frequently referred to as 'Whitechurch' in both spelling and pronunciation by the general public and media outlets. 'Stouffville,' although named after its first European settler Abraham Stouffer, of which the 'ff's are commonly pronounced, is often pronounced without the sound of the 'ff's. And thus, the spelling of the word has, at

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES:

Wednesday, October 16 at 7 p.m.:

Leisure Centre, 2 Park Drive, Stouffville

Thursday, October 17 at 7 p.m.:

Ballantrae Field House, 5592 Aurora Sideroad.

Cast your vote online: townofws.ca/name

times, appeared as 'Stouville.'"

The current name of the town provides at least two opportunities for mispronunciation and misspelling, Jackson said.

"This begs the question - is it time to just go with 'Stouffville?'"

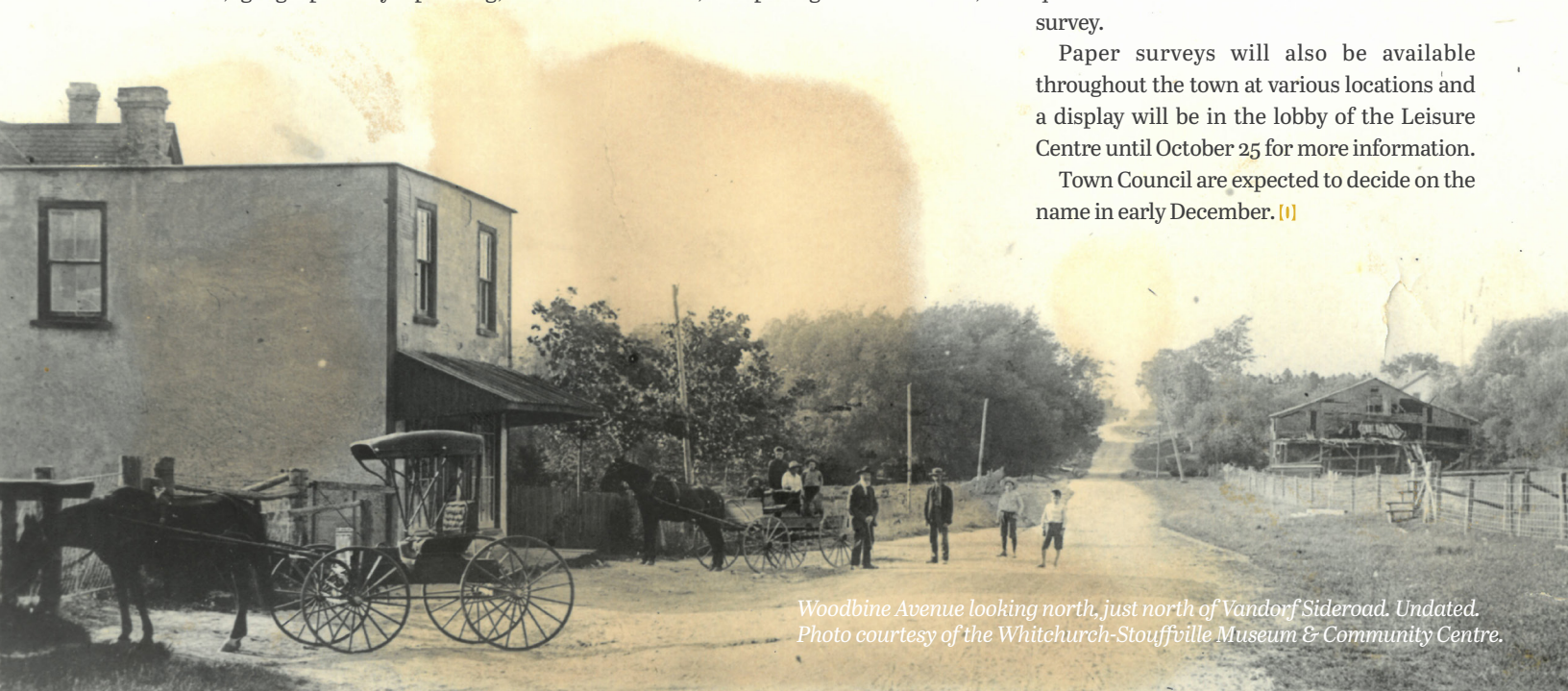
Last week the Town launched an online survey asking the community if they prefer 'Stouffville' or 'Whitchurch-Stouffville' as the town name. It is available online at townofws.ca/name.

"We just want to see what the public thinks. We certainly are not taking a side in this, but if we are going to be doing a complete rebrand, we want to know what name we are branding," Jackson said.

Along with the online survey, the community will also be able to offer their opinion at two Public Open Houses. The first will be Wednesday, October 16 at 7:00 p.m. in the Large Multipurpose Room at the Leisure Center (2 Park Drive, Stouffville), and the second will be held Thursday October 17 at 7:00 p.m. at the Ballantrae Field House (5592 Aurora Sideroad). Town staff will be on hand for both to answer questions and visitors will be able to fill out the survey.

Paper surveys will also be available throughout the town at various locations and a display will be in the lobby of the Leisure Centre until October 25 for more information.

Town Council are expected to decide on the name in early December. (1)



Woodbine Avenue looking north, just north of Vondorf Sideroad. Undated. Photo courtesy of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum & Community Centre.