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SPORTS A21
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The Review

RICHMOND'S FAVORITE SINCE 1932

Issue 67
Vol. 65 • Circ. 44,100
Saturday, August 23, 1997

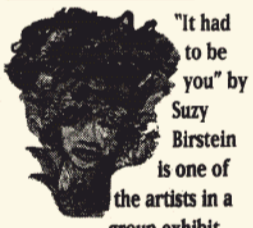
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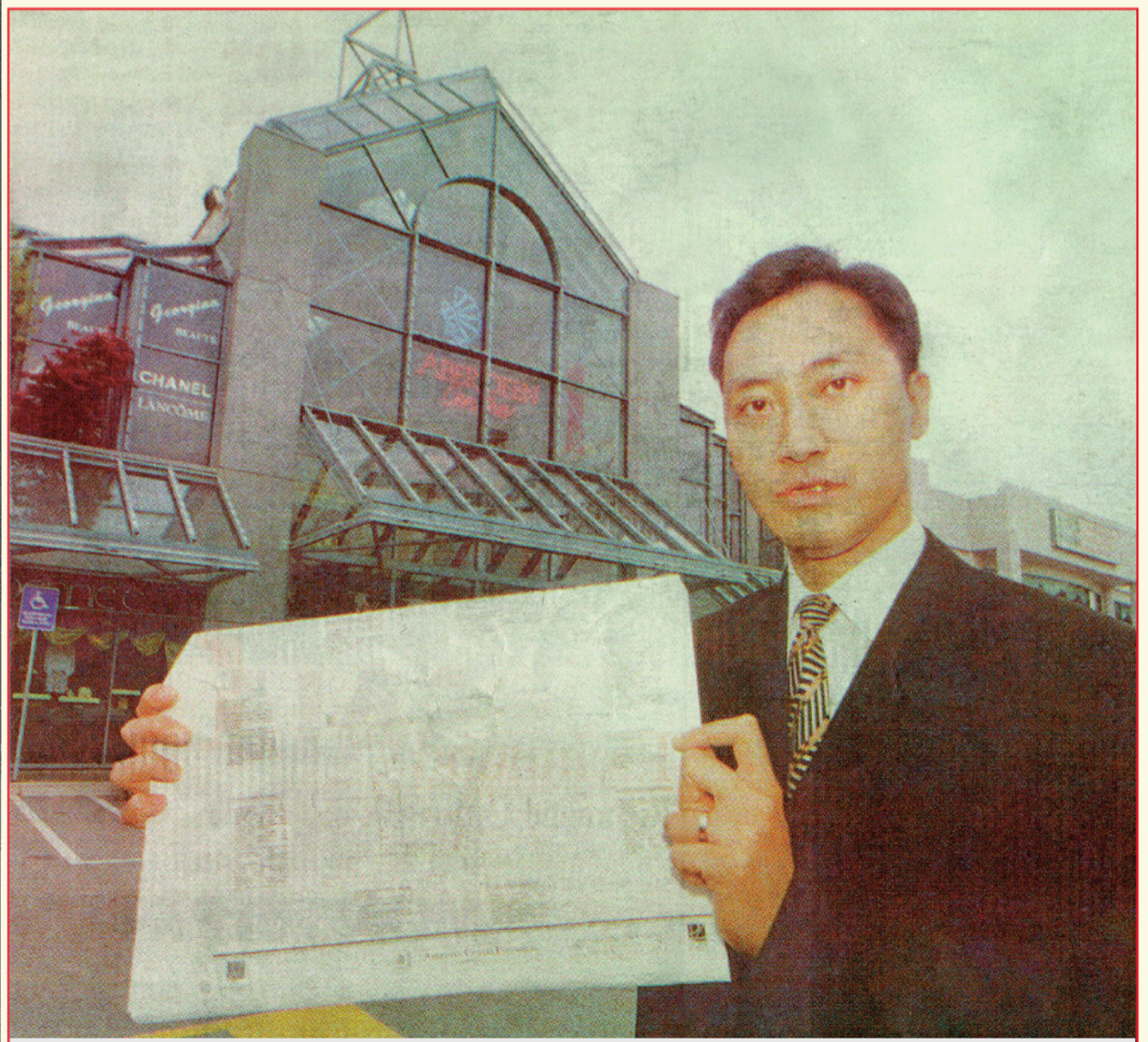
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LOOKING GOOD: A meeting with area residents Tuesday night indicate most back the proposed 560-million expansion of Aberdeen Centre, according to vice-president of marketing Gene Cheng. See story on Page A6. (photo by Mark Patrick)

Feedback on Aberdeen expansion mostly good

David DaSilva and Martin van den Hemel
staff reporters

This time they hope it satisfies everyone. Aberdeen Centre mall officials met with more than 100 residents Tuesday night concerning their proposed \$60-million expansion of the popular Asian shopping centre.

Their feedback on the recently revised plans was largely positive, according to Gene Cheng, vice-president of marketing for Fairchild Developments Ltd., the parent company of Aberdeen Centre.

That's in stark contrast to the position held by some area residents, who last December said they were upset about a lack of city notification about the plans. They also raised concerns about an increase in traffic, noise and pollution.

Of the four residents who spoke, three supported the project, while the other neither opposed nor backed it, according to Cheng.

"They want us to make the expansion in a responsible manner to reduce the effect on them," Cheng said Friday.

Cheng noted a traffic study is currently underway and the company will hire sound engineers to determine the expected level of noise for residents in the Brownlea Road area. Fences or berms could be used to mitigate noise levels.

But Cheng said the company will do what it takes to address residents' concerns.

"We expect to do what is necessary," Cheng said.

The company has revised the expansion plans to meet city staff wishes, and now it hopes it has succeeded in winning approval from residents.

The two-storey mall was originally pegged to grow to five storeys. The revised expansion plans could now see the mall become a seven-storey structure.

The mall's original plans showed two levels of parking, but at the city's request, an extra two levels were added. If approved, four of those levels are expected to be for parking, with 1,600 stalls in a parkade to be located on top of the mall.

The city wanted the extra two levels of parking due to a

lack of stalls in the area and they don't want to discourage residents from "mall hopping," when people drive and park to shop in each mall in the Asia West area.

"The area is short of parking so they want us to

contribute that as well," Cheng said.

Plans also show the Hazelbridge Way eventually re-aligning to connect with Northgate Way, just to the east. As well, Browngate Road would extend to No. 3 Road

from Hazelbridge Way.

If approved by the city, work on the mall's expansion could begin by the end of next summer, with completion scheduled by the year 2000. But even if the rezoning is approved, the

project could be delayed if the market conditions are poor in the retail sector, Cheng said.

Plans also include changing the mall from its predominantly Asian flavor.

"Down the road we want a

more international theme" with more non-Asian shopkeepers, he added.

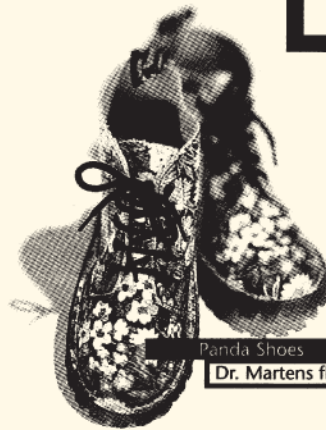
Another meeting of area residents will likely take place in three or four months when the second part of the traffic study on noise is completed.

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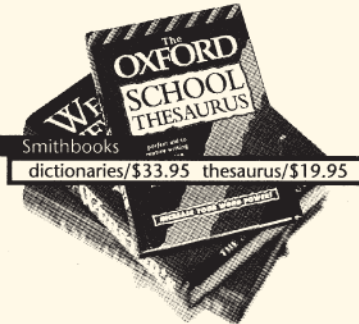
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