

Development freeze concerns members of Horton Council

by Bruce Hickey

A meeting of Horton Township Council June 24, saw the return of their proposed ten-year Official Plan from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

The ten-year plan, that will replace the one used since 1980, has been on the drawing board for the last four years.

Presenting the revised plan to council was Charles Cheesman of the Renfrew County Planning Committee.

Ministry revisions to the waterfront development, and mineral aggregate resource parts of the plan, met with opposition from council.

Regarding waterfront development along the River Road, the council wanted flexibility in allowing residents along the waterfront to build, and expand without having to bring access roads up to municipal standards.

Under the revised plan anyone who planned to develop waterfront property would first have to upgrade the access road to their property to meet provincial regulations. Provincial regulations for access roads are 66 feet wide (fence to fence), with ditches.

Council found the waterfront revisions unacceptable.

Horton Reeve Milton Stevenson remarked that there isn't room for 66-foot roads, there is only 100 feet between the River Road and the Ottawa River, and in some cases less.

The other revision that council opposed was in the area of aggregate resources, or gravel.

The Ministry of Natural Resources wishes to keep residential and commercial development away from operating gravel pits, and areas designated as aggregate by the Ministry of Natural Resources, in Horton Township.

In the revised plan a 90-metre "area of influence," would be placed around areas deemed as good gravel pits.

Anyone who owned land within this area would not be able to develop it, or be compensated for it under the revised plan.

"There will be some properties disadvantaged," said Cheesman.

An area of influence has been put around the MacKenzie Hill area of Hor-

ton Township, because it has the largest aggregate resource in the township.

Council felt that placing a 90-metre area of influence around MacKenzie Hill would be a waste of scenic land, prime for development. Council also mentioned that a subdivision had been proposed to them for the MacKenzie Hill area.

Reeve Stevenson felt development of this area would enhance its tourist potential.

Cheesman explained that scenic value was not a provincial interest.

"It's harsh restrictive zoning, and it will create a lot of problems," said Stevenson.

It was proposed by council that they barter with the Province of Ontario and Sullivan's of Arnprior, who wish to expand their gravel pit, presently in the MacKenzie Hill area.

Council would be prepared to designate land west of MacKenzie Hill aggregate, in order to pull the area of influence away from areas of potential development.

"We will not be influenced by the influence area," said Stevenson.

Horton minutes make history

Doris Humphries of Heritage Renfrew is granted permission to photocopy all of the township council's minutes.

The photocopies will become part of Heritage Renfrew's archives and provide easier access to researchers.

Heritage Renfrew will provide all paper and manpower, while the township will let the heritage group use its photocopy machine.

Petition presented

A group of Horton Township residents have submitted a petition to council regarding operation of an adjacent gravel pit.

Residents along the old Highway Drive-In Road are concerned gravel pit operations are moving too close to their back yards.

The residents want the buffer zone between the gravel pit and residential area expanded from 300 to 500 feet.

The township's current 300-foot bylaw requirement is already triple the 100-foot buffer required under the Pits and Quarries Act.

Wintario grant

Horton Township has received a \$15,146 Wintario grant.

The money will be used for Horton Sportsplex renovations including a new floor and air conditioning upstairs, handicapped washroom access and an enlarged kitchen.