

Horton council receives strong support for lot levy resolution

By Wanda Blimkie, *Sept 27/89*
Mercury reporter

Horton Township council has received a strong endorsement of their resolution, regarding opposition to legislation allowing school boards to establish lot levies, from Renfrew County council.

County council has added their name to the growing list of township councils who support Horton in petitioning the Ontario government to reconsider Bill 20, the Development Charges Act, that gives school boards in the province permissive authority to establish lot levies.

In the resolution, Horton states the municipal sources of revenue in Ontario are not increasing as fast as municipal expenditures and municipal lot levies have become important sources of revenue to cover growth-related expenditures in recent years.

Should the school boards be given the authority to establish lot levies it would create extra political and financial burden on local municipalities in administering and collecting school board levies.

Bill 20 received second reading on June 26. The Ontario Legislature's Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs will be holding hearings on the bill this fall, likely as early as September.

Among the other area township councils that supported Horton are Brudenell and Lyndoch, Township of North Algona, Bagot and Blythfield, Township of Raglan, Town of Arnprior, Township of Admaston, Town of Renfrew,

Municipality of Cobden, Village of Barry's Bay, Village of Killaloe, Corporations of the Townships of Rolph, Buchanan, Wylie and McKay.

However, Horton council was not encouraged by the response of Ontario treasurer Robert F Nixon.

However, in a letter to Horton council, Ontario treasurer Robert F Nixon stated in his 1989 budget he announced that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing John Sweeney would introduce the Development Charges Act which will give municipalities and school boards the option of establishing lot levies for the local share of growth-related capital projects.

"The Act will provide a permissive legislative framework for municipalities' front-end financing arrangements and will bring structure to existing lot levies," Nixon said.

Lot levies will be imposed at the option of local governments, Nixon stated, and no revenues will flow to the province as a result of this initiative. Lot levies are a charge on development and will be paid by developers who reap the benefits of government investment in capital infrastructure, such as sewer and water systems, through increased land values.

"Some of this benefit is recaptured, through lot levies, to help defray the cost of these services. Similarly, schools increase land values and developers should help to pay for them," Nixon added.

Nixon suggested the Development Charges Act reflects many constructive

suggestions made by interested groups. These include allowing municipalities with current lot levies of less than \$3,000 to have an additional year to conform to the Act and allowing the collection of lot levies at the subdivision agreement rather than the building permit stage.

No complaints from empty lots

At a council meeting Thursday, September 14, reeve Milt Stevenson stated the concerns of Horton council and County council are very real and he was not pleased with the response from Nixon.

Stevenson suggested the school board lot levies will be a deterrent to commercial development.

"The province is backing out of funding of unconditional grants and lot levies are our only other source of income. Then, they turn around and give school boards the option to collect lot levies and the township will end up being the tax collector," the reeve said.

When councillor Robert Kingsbury suggested an increase in lot levies will decrease development in the township, the reeve reminded council they didn't get complaints from vacant lots.

Stevenson noted the only hope for the township to recoup is strip development or planned subdivisions. The money to pay for services and extra road work has to come from somewhere or it will mean an increase in taxes, he said.

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Horton receives grant

The township of Horton has been allocated \$33,750 for the 1989/90 fiscal year for the establishment of waste management facilities, Environment Minister Jim Bradley has announced. The money will be used for hydrogeological studies and public consultation.

The waste management program is intended to aid municipalities in establishing or expanding landfill sites, transfer stations and processing facilities in an environmentally sound manner.

Under this program, grants are given to municipalities as appropriate approvals are received under the Environmental Assessment and Environmental Protection Acts.

Inspection of phase one of mobile home park completed

Inspection of phase one of the Thompson Mobile Home Park is complete, Horton township council has learned.

August 10 council saw a letter from consulting engineers Oliver, Mangione, McCulla and Associates Limited confirming completion of phase one and compliance to design.

The engineers conducted periodic inspections of everything from pump house and water main construction to chlorination and bacteriological testing.

August 10 Horton council also agreed to site plan amendments which will allow more

permanent foundations, plus double units.

Developer George Thompson feels the quality of homes being placed in the park will result in more permanent occupancy at the park.

The municipality's main concern is that all construction meet Ontario Building Code standards.

Horton's chief building official Dennis Fridgen was also present for the discussion.

He could foresee no problem with the proposed amendments.

The mobile home park, being developed by G & B Thompson Developments, is

located at County Road 6 at the Lime Kiln Road.

Revision of fees

Horton township council plans to review its schedule of building permit fees.

Among the items being reviewed will be mobile home fees which currently stand at \$35.

During a brief discussion of the review, Horton Reeve Milt Stevenson expressed his personal belief that property owners should bear these costs, not the ratepayers.

"I would like to see revision of the schedule of fees to more accurately reflect the

cost of these programs," said Reeve Stevenson.

Horton council will also consider advertisement of the Ontario Home Renewal Program (OHRP), a home-improvement program that offers government grants.

At the present time involvement in the program is low.

Fire department donation

Horton Township Deputy Fire Chief Nelson St Michael presented the department's July report to council August 10.

He reported that 10 firefighters participated in a house fire simulation training session last month.

Mobile home must be moved

Former Horton Township councillor Sheldon Church calls it "being led down the garden path".

Horton Township Council calls it abiding by the rules.

The two distinct outlooks clashed June 1 at Horton council's regular meeting as Church complained of being advised that a building permit to locate a mobile home adjacent to his residence for business purposes was approved, then a stop work order was issued.

The stop work order was issued after a complaint from a trailer park operator living across the road.

Reeve Milt Stevenson said he thought the permit was for a garage, not the addition of a mobile home and classification of the adjoining buildings as a duplex.

Further complicating the issue was the fact that Church never did actually pick up or pay for his building permit, claiming he didn't have the time.

Thursday night he asked council to grant him permission to leave the mobile home where it is until he has had an opportunity to apply for rezoning of the property from industrial to rural marginal.

He said the mobile home is locked, empty and would not be used until a judgment is made on the rezoning. Church further assured council that if the request was denied he would move the mobile home immediately.

He told township council it would cost him \$400 to \$500 to move the mobile home to another of his properties.

"I just don't understand that, believe me. In a month or two it could be legal," Church claimed.

But Horton township council wasn't interested in waiting. It wanted the mobile home moved now.

Church told council he feels he was "led down the garden path" when he was informed his building permit was approved, then work at the site was stopped.

Township council stood firm to its opinion that the mobile home's location contravenes the bylaw and won't be tolerated.

"The fact that the permit was issued in error does not make it legal," Reeve Stevenson noted.

Angered by council's decision, Church left the meeting visibly upset. "A great bunch of guys," he called sarcastically back as he left the room.

Before proceeding with the remainder of the council agenda, Reeve Stevenson praised council on its willingness to stand firm to its policy, plus its "vigilance to protect the interests of citizens here".

Councillor Bob Kingsbury probably summed up council's opinion best during the debate when he stated: "We have zoning bylaws and either everybody adheres to them or nobody. There's no two sets of standards".

The volunteer fire department also donated \$250 to the Renfrew and District Big Brothers organization.

It was also noted that the emergency planning committee held one meeting with Renfrew OPP Constable Randy Reid last month.

Name change

Horton township council has changed Raglan Street in the municipality to Nabodny Lane after a survey of local residents.

New street signs will be erected in the near future.

Resolutions supported

August 10 Horton

township council threw its support behind two resolutions.

The first resolution, from the Township of Wilberforce, seeks amendment of the Planning Act to allow the disposal of properties that have a separate property description due to previous land severance or previous land division of 25 acres or more, having a separate tax roll number and a separate tax bill.

The Township of Howick resolution asks the province to enact legislation requiring all chemical companies to provide for the return of and recycling of pesticide and herbicide containers.