

Council gives mixed responses to MPAC news

By Bob Owen
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Taxpayers in Cramahe Township received revised property valuations from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) in the final week of September. The average 18-month increases are almost 15 per cent. That has left many landowners wondering about their tax bill in 2006.

The question of the impact on taxes was put to Cramahe Township council at its October 4 meeting held in the Castleton Town Hall. Members of council were asked if they support reducing the township mill rate so people will not face huge tax increases next year.

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Ratepayers meeting to look at assessments

New property assessments will be the hot topic at the October 20 meeting of the Cramahe Ratepayers' Association.

The new property assessments just issued by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) are concerning many ratepayers, Alan Slater of the Cramahe group notes.

"There are many reasons to object to this system, including:

- The high average increase, and the variations in assessments between townships and even between neighbours.
- The huge increases given to some properties, such as waterfront, although they use local services no more than others.
- The increased assessments are seen by councils as a perfect excuse to raise taxes by keeping the same mill rate as last year.
- The waste of \$156-million a year on MPAC, which adds absolutely nothing to the Ontario economy."

Anyone with concerns about the property assessment system is urged to attend the Cramahe Ratepayers' meeting, 7:30 p.m. Thursday, October 20 at Friendship House, 77 King St. East, Colborne.



PHOTO BY BOB OWEN

MEMORIES SET IN STONE

The memory stone project is complete — maybe. Lenna Broatch, Doug Rutherford, Doug Denny and Bev Denny admire the 304 stones already laid at the front of Old St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. That was supposed to be the limit, but Mr. Rutherford has had 15 more enquiries and is considering adding another block. The stones which have been laid will be blessed in a special ceremony on October 16 at 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Cramahe sets new building record

By Bob Owen
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With three months left in the year, Cramahe Township has set a new record for construction starts.

The September report issued by chief building officer Natalie Moroz-Cornell gives the year-to-date total as \$9,494,546 putting it 31 per cent higher than at the same time last year and \$725,000 higher than last year's record-setting year-end total.

As of September 30, 46 single-family dwellings had been issued permits compared to 35 at this time last year. The 46

starts is one more than for the whole of last year. The 2004 total exceeded 2003 by 50 per cent.

It is likely that this month the township will exceed the 2002 record number of permits issued for a year. As of September 30 there had been 118 permits. Only 11 are needed to set yet one more record.

Permits were granted for eight new homes in September and one seasonal dwelling. Value of those alone was \$1.28-million. Six of the eight permits granted for single family dwellings were in rural Cramahe, one was in the Colborne Creek development owned by the Township and the other was on Durham Street South.