

OPINION

A 'sensitive' street

Halton Hills is planning a \$720,000 redevelopment of Main Street in Georgetown but residents and business owners have some reservations that the street's character is at risk.

Perhaps if the Town used the word "restore" Main Street instead of redevelopment they would get a better reception. It's a sensitive part of Georgetown along the south end of the street. Its roots go right back to when the town was laid out and traffic consisted mainly of horses and carriages.

Now it's a busy thoroughfare, with vehicles using the narrow, bumpy road both for access to busy Maple Avenue, to shop downtown or access Hwy. 7. Traffic volumes will increase as housing developments on the Eighth Line south are occupied. So the Town is trying to get a handle on traffic before it has some real problems with gridlock.

However, the nature of the street from Knox Church to Maple does not lend itself to major redevelopment because of the variety of business and housing. Parking for business situated there is already at a premium. Eliminate the parking as the Town wants to do and it creates real problems for both business and residential.

For instance, Dave Clark at the Vehicle Registration outlet now has room for five cars in front of his business. Those five parking spaces are in the way of redevelopment as the Town sees it. It's a critical situation for an agency which requires a fair amount of parking.

The Town also wants to extend the downtown median, annexing the front of Joe Wallace's property and taking away his tenants' parking. There are other concerns, too, from residents of Cote Terrace, and from a resident who is worried that two underground springs on the street could be improperly rerouted.

The south end of the street really is old Georgetown at its best, or worst if you have to deal with any reconstruction. The street has many stately old homes along its southern length, the old Barber house built by an early Georgetown entrepreneur, and an eclectic mixture of other homes and apartments. Knox Church dominates the street where it evolves into mixed use of business and homes.

When Georgetown was first laid out it was intended that Main Street would be the main street in the hamlet, and all other streets radiated out from this principal thoroughfare. Of course, over the decades, the focus has changed as the village grew into a town. Main Street no longer is the only choice for commerce. As the town grew into the east over the Silver Creek valley the old business section just couldn't handle the volume of growth. However, it has never lost its 19th Century charm, as various movie companies which have filmed here will vouch.

The business community and residents along Main Street have tried hard over the decades since World War 2 to modernize the old downtown without sacrificing it at the altar of modern utilitarian building and thought. They have succeeded in preserving much of the old downtown core with some of the stately homes along Main Street South preserved by business. Parking has not been a big problem because of the foresight in constructing the large lot behind Main Street, the nearby Legion parking lot and parallel parking along Main and its side streets.

Sometimes people attending events at the cultural centre or Knox Church might have to walk a block or two but there has never been a paucity of parking spots. There well might be if the parking along the south end of Main is eliminated. Certainly, most of the street will change unless the Town can find a way to modernize without destroying its character.

It would be a commendable objective if the Town "restored" rather than redeveloped this important slice of Georgetown's history.

— H.C.



ACROSS THE FENCE

With Joanne Stevenson
Gem Copy Editor



A true gold medal performance ...

Have you caught Olympic fever? I'm afraid we're addicted in my house. We can recite names and statistics as easily as Bob Costas. We know who's competing, when, and the particular obstacles each athlete had to overcome to make it to Atlanta.

And while I'd prefer the kids to be outside getting some exercise themselves, at least the Olympics provide better viewing options than *The Young and the Restless*, *Oprah*, or *Maury Povich*.

The trouble, as with any addiction, is when it interferes with your life. I've been staying up way past my bedtime to see how the gymnastics events turn out, leaving me bleary-eyed the next day.

If I pass the T.V. on my way to the washing machine, it's too easy to rest on the arm of the couch and watch one little race. But like those potato chips, you can't watch just one. Before long, an hour passes and the laundry is still not done.

The same is true of the other work that needs doing. We're lucky to have dinner some days, and like Atlanta's Centennial Park, it looks like a bomb went off here.

So, in true Olympic form, we held our own Household Olympics last week. With the T.V. off, we went through the events focused and determined.

In the bathroom cleaning event, my daughter was superb. She showed great form cleaning the sinks and mirrors, though she lost a few points on the toilet apparatus.

My son faced the dusting challenge with great courage. I think he set a new world record—what should normally take an hour to do, he did in a scant 30 minutes! The judges suspect steroid use.

On floor washing, my other daughter put forth a fine effort. Though her routine did not include scrubbing on hands and knees, her mopping skills were well within Olympic standards.

For my part, I've been compared to Keri Strug, who performed a gold medal vault on a sprained ankle. Even with my bad knee, I managed to cut and edge the lawn, trim two hedges, vacuum the house and leap over piles of laundry.

My best event was at the bar however. Nothing like a cold beer to celebrate our victory!

What Do You Think?

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Put your thoughts on paper and drop them off at Personal Secretarial Services (Unit 47, 360 Guelph St.). OR, fax your letter to 853-5040.

OR, mail it to P.O. Box 145, Georgetown, L7G 4T1.

Deadline is Sunday at 4 pm • Please sign your letter

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