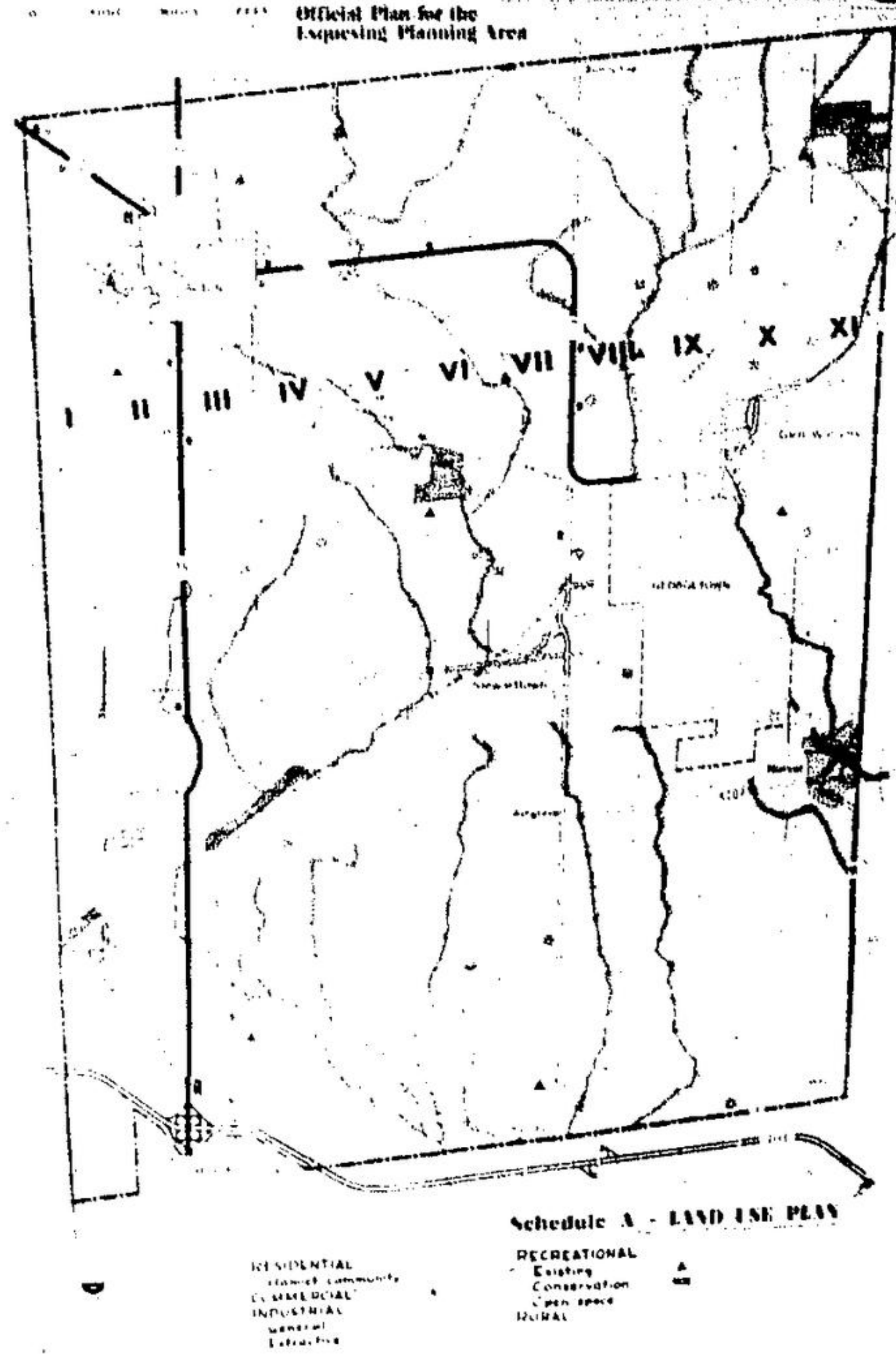


# Over 200 ratepayers at Esquesing meeting



Proposed official land use plan of Esquesing

## Criticize amendment method township's Official Plan

Esquesing's official plan should be an attempt to design development instead of a series of continuous amendments, insisted Monty Hyde, representing would-be developer F. Zammitoff.

Mr. Hyde said the plan unveiled Thursday did not tell where development can take place so they could follow it up. He suggested an official plan of a municipality is supposed to represent the shape it will take as the planners force it.

Mr. Hyde said his client has owned land in Esquesing for 16 years and would like to develop it, but efforts to appear before the planning board to discuss the matter now appear doomed by the proposed Official Plan. He said it disturbed him that the plan only recognized an existing use.

**Defends system**

Councillor Dick Howitt, replying for the planning board, said they discussed the method of presenting the official plan and decided on the present way to

enable people to know what was going on. He defended the application for amendment procedure as one which let the planning board do its business properly and allows people in an area of new development know what is going on, as well as giving them time to object.

"What's wrong with doing it by amendments?" he asked Mr. Hyde. If another course had been taken the board could have been swamped with amendments. We said "whoa" and everyone now wants to get their own ideas into the plan, some of them strictly for their own benefit.

Later in the meeting Helen Atkinson also criticized the method of amendment the plan rather than designating certain spots in the township for development, claiming many of the amenities people would like to see developed would be frustrated by the process, pointing to a drive-in theatre as an example.

**Narrow decision?**

Mrs. Atkinson suggested that letting people in one area decide whether a development was good or bad for the township would result in narrow decisions which might go against the welfare of Esquesing.

Planner L. R. Keddy told the questioner that the entire process revolved around the quality of people the ratepayers elected to council and their interest in the community as a whole. "You have to have faith in your council," he said.

"That's having an awful lot of faith," said Mrs. Atkinson sitting down to a ripple of laughter.

## Officials red-faced insufficient plans

Esquesing township officials admitted they were moderately embarrassed by the insufficient number of copies of the proposed Official Plan of the township available for residents. Demand for copies of the plan was brisk following Thursday's meeting but few were available.

Mrs. Audrey Blanch said she had tried to put the required \$25 deposit down to acquire a plan before the Thursday meeting but none were available. Only eight copies of the plan were available for the whole township, she claimed.

Township officials, a trifle red-faced, admitted they goofed when they anticipated demand.

Copies of the Official Plan were bound in a glossy cover with a pine tree on the cover, in reference to the Indian word for the township, which means "Land of Tall Pines."

**Extend limit?**

Several people at the meeting thought that in view of the scarcity of the plans and the short one week time limit to register objections, the August 5 time limit should be extended.

Planning Board chairman Fred Helson said, however, that residents of the township had every opportunity to hear the plan outlined at Thursday's meeting. Notices of the meeting had been published in all three township papers and the board had used every device it could to let people know of it.

Councillor Dick Howitt said earlier the planners felt holding a meeting would avoid a lot of unnecessary flack and facilitate the plan's implementation.

Objections to the plan must be in the hands of the township clerk by August 5.

## Four objections cut no ice

Lawyer Peter K. McWilliams, representing Milton Brick Co. said he appeared at the Esquesing Official Plan meeting for four reasons:

1. The company was anxious to know whether they could carry on business under the restrictions of an Official Plan.
2. He had seen nothing designated on the maps for waste disposal site the company had offered to Esquesing, Nassagaweya and Milton. He urged the township consider it more thoroughly.
3. He said there was no mention of plans for a water supply for Milton Heights, pointing out several meetings had been held on the matter and then it seems to have been dropped. There is a water inadequacy, he claimed, which on occasions had shut the plant down, and caused hardship to people in the south-west portion of the township. Mr. McWilliams suggested the township should be thinking of a plan to supply water

to the area. "If Milton can take water from our land, surely the township can plan for water on its own land."

**Other hamlets**

4. Mr. McWilliams suggested that the township was discriminating against the other hamlets in Esquesing by allowing limited development in only Norval, Glen Williams and Stewarttown. He said places like Ballinacree, Speyside, Ashgrove, Hornby, Milton Heights and Peru were also attractive places for residents to live and should be allowed some expansion, especially in view of the fact Milton Brick anticipated some development in the Peru area.

Reeve Tom Hill answered Mr. McWilliams regarding the water and waste disposal sites. He said Esquesing had a good dump site now in the north end of the township, had spent some money on it and it now was in good shape, unlike Milton which has to find a new site for its waste disposal. The onus for obtaining water

for residents of Milton Heights was on people in the area, the reeve said. He attended several meetings regarding hooking into the Milton line but residents were put off by the "enormous" cost and changed their mind.

**Support now**

Mr. McWilliams said he believed support from residents would be forthcoming for a local water system now if one was organized. As for the present dump, it was too far away for residents in the south end of the township.

If the people of the area are still interested in obtaining water, council will look into the matter, further said the reeve. But the last he remembers the residents of Milton Heights were to contact Nassagaweya people regarding the problem. However, the reeve died there and the project was dropped.

Mr. Helson said the present dump was good for another 10 years so the township felt their needs were well looked after.

Over 200 Esquesing ratepayers attended a public meeting at Stewarttown school Thursday night to hear the draft copy of the township's proposed Official Plan presented and explained to them by L. R. Keddy of the firm of L. M. Dillon.

With the aid of three large maps and several other visual aids, Mr. Keddy outlined the definition of an Official Plan, explained the differences between it and the zoning by-law and then—after a short recess—gave ratepayers the opportunity to ask questions.

After a short, awkward silence, when it seemed no one was going to question the planning of the township, there followed almost three hours of questions which were fielded by Mr. Keddy, Planning Board chairman Fred Helson and the reeve and Councillor Dick Howitt.

There were representatives present from the extractive

industries, would-be developers and many people with problems of their own. (Development in the township has been frozen since the controversial agricultural holding by-law was initiated).

**Continuous policies**

Mr. Keddy explained the plan would provide continuous policies designed to guide the future growth and policies of the municipality and this would form the basis of the zoning by-law which would follow, the tool of the Official Plan. Both the Official Plan and Zoning By-law are subject to approval by the Ontario Municipal Board.

The firm of L. M. Dillon carried out background studies on the township and then based their plan on them. Studies were conducted on the historical, physical, people and economy of the township including the conservation aspects and talks with the three conservation authorities.

"The township is in an enviable position," declared Mr. Keddy, because of its excellent financial shape.

He outlined a brief history of Esquesing from the time the Scotch Block was first settled in 1823. He reviewed population growth, noting Esquesing had a 60 per cent growth in the last decade.

It was evident, he said, from the figures that Glen Williams and Norval were the preferred urban centres in the township. Projection of future population showed a possible 10,300 in 1978 and 11,400 in 1981.

**Follow principles**

Mr. Keddy said planners tried their best to follow the guide lines in the provincially sponsored Toronto Central Region plan, which put the township in zone two, designated rural and agricultural. The question was whether to let Esquesing grow as it has, or slow it up with controls.

"There is no percentage in being big," he declared, so with the help of the planning board they decided on low profile growth with no large increases in population. They would attempt to slow down the fantastic township growth which was double the Ontario rate, which in its turn is the fastest growing province in Canada.

The plan would also preserve the township's desirable characteristics, especially the rural areas.

He noted 57 per cent of Esquesing's residents were classed as the working force which was a far cry from the day when farmers dominated the land. Only 21 per cent of the population lived on census farms in 1966. Of 2,327 residential buildings now, figures showed 886 were farm and 1461 non-farm.

Highlights of the proposed Official Plan were as follows:

The township would be divided into five basic land use categories, namely rural, hamlets, commercial, industrial and recreational.

In the rural areas the predominant use of land would be agriculture, forestry and conservation with non-farm residential development permitted on a limited scale at a maximum density of four persons per acre.

Estate residential development would be allowed on rural areas only by registered plan of subdivision with a minimum lot area of two acres and a minimum dwelling of 1,800 square feet. These estates would be limited to wooded areas, adjacent to valley lands and scenic views. Population density would be two persons per acre.

In the hamlets where building is allowed the plan would permit residential, commercial and industrial uses with the minimum lot area for a single family dwelling set at 15,000 sq. ft. until the municipality has a water supply system when it would be cut to 7,500. Minimum floor area of a house in the hamlets would be 1,800 sq. ft.

Commercial uses would be permitted with no more than one residential unit in part of, or over any commercial use. There must be no open storage and they must have adequate off-street parking.

Industrial uses will be permitted and regulated by council with existing uses permitted on plan but new areas must be the subject of an amendment.

It is intended that all valley lands and several ravines be free of urban development.

Extractive industries will be permitted use for minerals natural to the site.

Residential development will be permitted in the vicinity of Georgetown provided it is logical, orderly and progressive expansion of the three hamlets of Norval, Glen Williams and Stewarttown and provided it takes place commencing near the centre of the hamlets and progresses towards Georgetown. Other hamlets in the township would be allowed only the growth anticipated in rural areas.

No development would be permitted to exceed the growth rate of two per cent by a margin of 20 per cent.

No large residential developments would be allowed near the three towns in the area of the township, Acton Georgetown or Milton.

It is not the intent to serve the three designated hamlets with water or sewer systems within the period of five years unless it is necessary to safeguard public health.

Uses in existence today would remain legal and lawful uses of land if they conform but the plan does not allow room for creating non-conforming uses of land.

The plan provides for amendments to the zoning by-law.

Objections to the proposal must be in the hands of the township clerk not later than August 5.

## 1800 sq. ft. homes discrimination? planning board says will reconsider

1,800 square foot homes, the minimum proposed for the rural areas of Esquesing in the draft official plan, were called too big, too expensive and beyond the reach of most people in the township, by Mrs. Horace Bell, Thursday.

"Few people today could build that kind of a house," Mrs. Bell told over 200 ratepayers, the planner and the planning board and council of the township.

**\$20 square foot**

Building the house would cost \$36,000, she figured, based on the average \$20 per square foot, and this would place it well beyond the reach of most township residents. "Young people holding a lot now and making payments on it will never be able to build."

Mrs. Bell told the meeting the township would end up like Nassagaweya with very high taxes if the proposal went through.

"How many homes in the township, other than the old farm homes, are 1,800 square feet?" she asked, noting some people already have \$8 - \$10,000 already tied up in half to three-quarter acre lots on which they may never be able to build. How many old people, she asked, want such a large home to look after?"

Mrs. Bell said the proposal was discriminatory.

Planner L.R. Keddy acknowledged few people build

big homes these days but noted the planners don't want small homes on big lots. "You're right," he told Mrs. Bell, "young people won't go in — it is not the intention of the plan to let them."

**Encourage big homes**

The idea of the estate development proposal was to encourage expensive homes, he said, indicating they would help the township bear the tax burden and maintain the rural character of the land.

Discrimination?

"There's not a piece of planning that doesn't discriminate in some way," Mr. Keddy claimed. The question that should be asked is whether the planning is better for the majority.

Nassagaweya's high tax rate was due to other pressures, not the lack of homes, the planner said, especially the high cost of services.

Planning Board chairman Fred Helson said comments like Mrs. Bell's were what the board was after. The decision to create an estate development was empirical and the board did not necessarily know it was right.

Later in the meeting when Frank Meswick quietly asked how the township was going to look after labor's needs and accused the planning board of trying to push them out of the township, Mr. Helson said the planning board would reconsider the 1,800 square foot figure and consider 12 - 1400 square feet as the minimum requirement for rural homes.

**Costly house**

Mr. Meswick acknowledged there was a place for estates in Esquesing, but reckoned the cost of a home and the land if present recommendations were law, would amount to \$46,000.

Several other questioners challenged the proposed part of the plan with William McGowan stating only a lawyer or doctor could afford to live in the rural parts of the township. Older people looking for houses would be handicapped because they don't want 1,800 square feet to look after.

The estate plan was tantamount to pushing people into ghettos, charged Fourth Line resident Bob Armstrong. He said people would be obliged to live in the hamlets designated for

building and this would preclude the young people from enjoying the area.

"There has to be some other method to maintain control," he said, suggesting the board investigate a minimum assessment instead.

Mr. Armstrong felt the board should not pass any plan until they investigated further. "You are making a law absolutely foreign to our country," he accused.

Mr. Helson, annoyance showing in his voice, said the planning board had tried to avoid any controls that would interfere with the rights of all people to build where they could, but study of all other plans, including minimum assessment, had failed to point out a solution.

"If you have a better answer," he told Mr. Armstrong, "tell us."

## Ask annexation if can't build

Lawyer C. F. Leatherland told Esquesing planning board he would apply for annexation by the town of Acton if they continued to refuse to change the use of land designated "rural" on Churchill Road N., adjacent to Acton.

Mr. Leatherland said he represented three ratepayers. The land could be serviced by watermain and sewers by Acton. It is vacant, and has not been used for over 20 years.

Ratepayers had submitted a plan of subdivision to the Department two years ago and then went to the township planning board. It is not fair to designate the land rural, he told Thursday's meeting, and he intended to apply for annexation if the township persisted.

Planner L. R. Keddy replied that control was the reason for the refusal to grant permission to

build but Mr. Leatherland should not rule out an amendment to the plan, if it is warranted.

Several minor developments would like to get off the ground, he told the Acton lawyer, "but we can't hold up the plan to suit them."

Mr. Leatherland suggested the plan could be amended now since it had already been with the planning board two years and sent to the Department of Municipal Affairs over a year ago. But members of the planning board said the development had been called "premature" by the Department and referred to as "string" development.

## Keep twp. to selves?

Esquesing's proposed official plan gives Jack Van der Meer the impression planners feel the people of the township want to keep it all to themselves.

He cited the two per cent growth figure, cited in the plan, as looking after the natural increase only. People from anywhere else would not be let into the township, as he saw it.

"We would just sit here and not let anyone else in until Georgetown annexed us or maybe Metro Toronto."

**Growth better**

Mr. Van der Meer suggested to applause at Thursday's plan unveiling, that growth was a far better way of balancing assessment and keeping the township from going exclusive.

Planner L. R. Keddy replied that growth would be controlled by issuing building permits and severances. In this way the township would also be able to balance the rural areas and hamlets.

But Mr. Keddy denied planners had such a narrow view. He felt, however, that there was nothing wrong with Esquesing people wanting to keep advantages they now enjoy.



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