

Planning board bats that old annexation ball around

Members of Acton Planning Board will hold a meeting on the subject before they invite a representative of Project Planners to another special meeting to discuss annexation of an area east of Acton.

The subject arose at the regular meeting of the Board Thursday following a receipt of two letters regarding annexation of land east of Acton. The letters urged the town to take some action so proposed development in what is now Esqueusing township could proceed.

Mayor Les Doby, an advocate of annexation started the discussion going suggesting the board continue to think of annexing 1,000 acres, which would double the town's land

area and possibly attract needed assessment. "We don't want piecemeal annexation," the mayor declared.

He pointed out the folly of annexing land west of town when services such as water and sewers lay to the east, where it would minimize costs to tie into them.

Board member Dave Muckle cautioned against too much hurry in asking for land when the advent of regional government may be closer than most people think. He urged the board if they decided annexation was necessary that it must be done right.

"Let's spend the money and go for the bundle or wait for regional government," he advised.

Councillor Bill Coats suggested that letters urging annexation also had a note of personal interest where land owners have their own little plan, feeling if they are annexed, it would get built on.

"It is time to sit down and spell out our plans for 1,000 acres," he stated, "and if we decide to annex the plan is ready. If regional government comes we will still have a plan for them to consider."

He also suggested that it might be more expedient for the town to ask for 200 acres instead of 1,000 if Esqueusing township made no objections. He felt the board should sit down and talk it over with Esqueusing. Cost of annexing 1,000 acres could also be

prohibitive, he told the board, if figures of \$35,000 it cost Milton to turn the annexation trick were applied to Acton.

The plan should come first, declared Councillor Coats.

Chairman Sid Saltz thought the discussion was needless. He reviewed the history of annexation talk in Acton and pointed to previous resolutions from planning board to council recommending the town proceed with annexation that were lost in the procedural jungle somewhere.

"No action was taken," said Mr. Saltz.

Cloud issue Councillor Norm Elliott said

his colleague Councillor Coats' argument reflected the general feeling of council on the subject but cost and reaction from Esqueusing were clouding the issue.

"I'd like to see us annex 1,000 acres, he said, but it might be more practical to divide the land up in blocks and proceed with a piecemeal approach, enclosing the people who want to be

annexed in the first block. Then find out if it is practical to go to phase two."

Mr. Elliott admitted the annexation ball had been batted back and forth between council and planning board with equal facility but at the same time felt it was up to planning board to take the initiative.

What happened to previous board recommendations to council?

"Impending regional government, has been the excuse," the chairman said, noting also a suggestion to bring the planner in had also been done before at some expense.

"We've been guilty of procrastination," admitted Mr. Elliott.

"If we don't probe we are plugged into the planning process — then we are in trouble."

declared the mayor. "and planning will be done for us by others," added Elliott.

The mayor said it was imperative that municipalities in the south be made aware that the north end of the county has planning boards, too, and they had no prerogative on them.

He stated that adding another 1,000 acres on Acton's size was not extravagant and would allow the town to plan its future with more certainty than with piecemeal annexation. However, he conceded it would be foolish to antagonize Esqueusing with whom they have the best of relations.

"But if we don't do something, some other area's people are going to be governing us," he noted emphatically. "I'd like to see the planning done while we can, he said, feeling it was essential to get something on paper."



THE DRINKWALTER family stole the show at Saturday's I.G.A. bonspiel at the Acton Curling Club. Teaming up with Rae Swackhamer, Denise, mother Val and father Bob walked off with the trophy. Dave Manes made the presentation. — (Staff Photo)

Planning board favors more town houses on hill

Members of Acton Planning Board looked favorably on a scheme for a second 36 to 44 town house development proposed for four acres of industrial land on the "cemetery hill" off Main St. S. and Vimy St., across the street from the town houses presently being constructed by Alteo Construction.

The Board passed a resolution Thursday recommending that Acton council rezone the property (Lot 289) from M2 (Industrial) to R4 providing that the developer, Ross Cescon, and the municipality can come to a satisfactory agreement and plan prior to any formal council application.

Councillors Norm Elliott and Bill Coats expressed reservations about the resolution, the former because he felt there was not information available. The latter warned that rezoning R4 meant a developer could sidestep a subdivision agreement.

"We must be wary when we rezone to R4," cautioned Councillor Coats.

should get every consideration to go ahead.

"We've spent years trying to develop assessment and get nowhere," he declared "and we may have to go with developers we know can go. It is hard trying to draw up a budget when there is no new assessment to help," he said in reference to budget meetings of council.

The mayor noted he had been at a meeting that day where almost every municipality had 75 to 300 homes being built, which would yield new assessment while Acton continued to bang its collective head against a brick wall.

"But what if the lines can't handle the development," asked board member Vic Bristow.

The mayor said that the town would do its utmost to accommodate an industry if it decided to locate there—so why not housing?

The developer said he would not be building this year although it was an opportune time with money available. He suggested approvals would not get through on time. Price of the houses would likely be under \$20,000, if services were not too expensive, Mr. Cescon said.

Conditions favorable Developer Ross Cescon appeared at the meeting with a rough plan for the development, explaining the existence of another subdivision across the street and an improvement in the Beardmore effluent disposal, made building conditions more favorable than when he first proposed developing the property for residential use three years before.

Chairman Sid Saltz agreed the board should look at the proposal again, noting three years ago the land was unsuitable because it was industrial but now all prospective industry was being directed to the industrial park off Main St. N.

Councillor Coats reminded the board the town engineer was concerned with density of population in that end of town because the main sewer line may not be able to handle the load further development would create. He felt any change in rezoning to R4 would also take control from the town's hands. He also advocated a complete agreement be reached before the board endorsed the project.

Mr. Cescon assured the board that if they gave a favorable recommendation to council he would observe all the town requirements. He told the board he paid only \$25 a year in taxes now but the town could realize as high as \$12,000 in tax revenue when the houses were built.

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Fred Les Doby, fed up with Quenna Park and other developers delaying the building in Acton, said he felt Mr. Cescon

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THE ACTON OFFICE OF DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT LICENSE ISSUER Will Be Closed

Good Friday, March 31st
Easter Monday, April 3rd

OUR OFFICE WILL BE OPEN
THURSDAY, MARCH 30 'TIL 6 P.M.
SATURDAY, APRIL 1st 'TIL 6 P.M.

No Extension Has Been Granted
For 1972 Plates—Deadline to Purchase Locally is Thursday, March 30th at 6 p.m.

Ed Watson
Local Issuer

WHAT COUNCIL DID

Council dealt with a variety of matters at their regular meeting Tuesday.

Council will underwrite half the cost of sending two students to the annual national school safety parade and jamboree in Ottawa this spring. Two Acton students have regularly attended this event. This year the Hamilton Automobile Club wrote requesting council pay half the cost for the two local youngsters, \$35 each.

Mayor Doby and councillor Peter Marks were named voting delegates for the founding convention of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Several council members indicated they would be attending the convention in Ottawa in June, including Dr. Oakes who might be representing county council. The number of delegates is based on the population of the municipality, and clerk-administrator Joe Hurst pointed out Acton would likely have three voting delegates next year.

A resolution was passed approving proposed expenditures on roads and streets for 1972 — \$50,000 for construction, \$50,000 for maintenance, a total of \$100,000. The figures are forwarded to the department as regular procedure.

Works superintendent Al Doby was named weed inspector for the town.

Deputy-reeve McKenzie enquired about progress on rezoning for the second medical centre, and Mr. Hurst said work is proceeding on the zoning amendment.

Council learned that the public works committee authorized R. V. Anderson Associates, engineers, to do a profile and sectioning of Bower St. to Mill St. The clerk was to notify the engineer that the town work force would look after the removal of trees and the hydrant. The engineer was to be asked to suggest where the underground hydro service should be located.