The Acton Free Press

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TECO shuffles Halton

Halton's TECO (Technical Co-Ordinating) Committee Report, unveiled on the weekend after about 20 meetings and three months of study, proposes to revamp both the internal and external boundaries of the present Halton County if Halton becomes a two-tier region of government in the future.

Basing their thinking on watershed boundaries, the TECO committee released a report that calls for including part of West Flamborough and all of East Flamborough and Waterdown—presently in Wentworth County—in the new Halton region. The addition of lands along Halton's west border includes a triangular-shaped piece of Puslinch Township land from the south corner of Wellington County, too.

Internally, the report recommends cutting Halton's seven present towns and townships to five lower-tier municipalities or boroughs. Milton, a small portion of north Oakville and most of Nassagaweya would be lumped into one borough; Acton, Georgetown and almost all of Esquesing into another; Oakville would remain virtually untouched; Burlington would lose its north-western corner; and a new municipality would be created containing the north of Burlington plus Waterdown, East Flamborough and part of West Flamboro and Puslinch.

Discuss Saturday

Halton County Council is sponsoring an all-day seminar this Saturday at Halton Centennial Manor in Milton, where all 60 municipal councillors in the county will gather to discuss and debate the TECO report. If the TECO report is adopted it will be sent on to the provincial government as a recommendation to the province's municipal affairs advisors. The TECO report was drawn on the advice of Municipal Affairs Minister Darcy McKeough and local MPP's, who said the province wants some input from Halton to help it form policies on future regions.

If a region is recommended, there are indications it can't possibly be invoked for 1973 and would have to wait until 1974.

Under TECO's recommended two-tier system, many responsibilities presently held by local municipalities would be turned over to the regional council.

Two areas of Halton would be lost under the TECO plan. A small portion along Oakville's east boundary which lies in the Credit Valley watershed adjacent to the large Erin Mills development should become part of the Peel region, says TECO.

Go to Wellington

Lands in northern Nassagaweya Township, north of 25 Sideroad, lie outside the Halton watershed and should become part of Wellington County, the report indicates. Their boundary map shows lands in the first concession of Esquesing, north of 25 Sideroad, going the Wellington route as well.

New boundaries of the Milton-Nassagaweya borough would be the gas pipeline south of Derry Rd. on the south; the present Nassagaweya Town Line on the west 25 Sideroad on the north; and the Esquesing-Nassagaweya Town Line and Highway 401 on the east. Milton's eastern boundary is scheduled to stretch one concession eastward, to Fourth Line Oakville.

The report does not attempt to name the proposed municipalities but refers to them as blocks A to E. The report outlines what the responsibilities of the region and the constituent communities would be.

Factors considered

Five factors were considered by TECO when they devised local boundaries. Those factors are internal drainage, reduction of the number of local units, and each municipality should have an urban core as suggested by the Minister of Municipal Affairs in his proposal in January 1969. Other factors were the Toronto Centred Region Plan with particular attention to the Parkway Belt and the Niagara Escarpment plan as well as the effect of the MacDonald Cartier Highway.

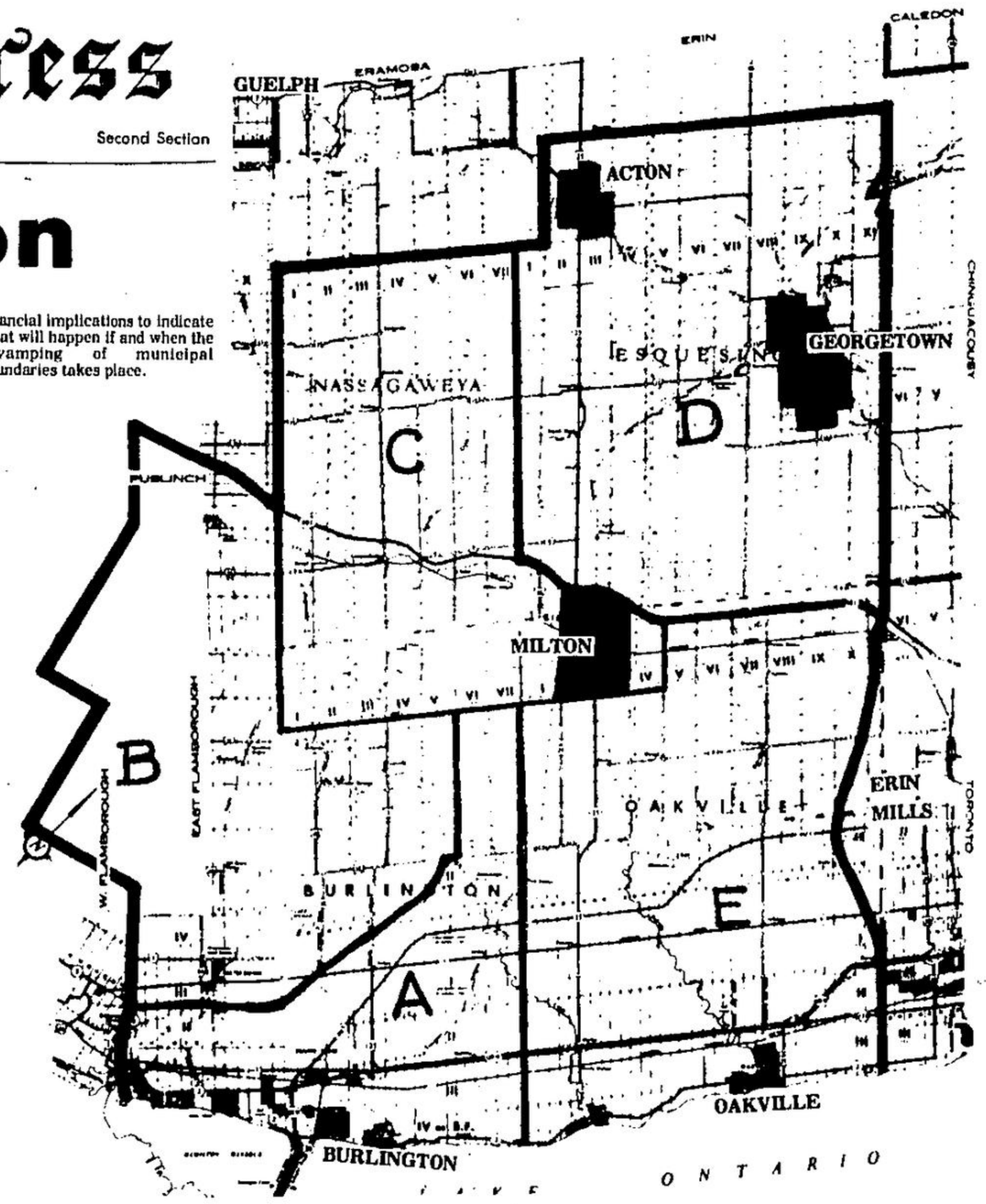
The report indicates a parkway belt that would cover a wide swath of Esquesing and Nassagaweya and lesser portions of Burlington and Oakville.

Staff work

The scheme comes after 20 meetings and more than three months of study by the TECO committee. That committee is composed of staff members from Halton County, towns and townships in the county.

It follows a long line of reports dating back to the Plunkett report in 1965. While a number of reports have been commissioned, this is the first one that represents a county effort.

TECO's report contains no financial implications to indicate what will happen if and when the revamping of municipal boundaries takes place.



THE TECO REPORT on Halton's future as an independent region of government, released this week, proposes Halton's internal and external boundaries to be juggled around as shown in this map. The present Burlington would remain in Halton but would be split with the built-up area "A" as one unit or borough and the remainder joining with portions of West Flamborough and Puslinch and all of Waterdown and East Flamborough to form unit "B". Unit "C" would include most of what is now Nassagaweya, plus Milton and a small piece of north-west Oakville. Area "D" would include Acton, Georgetown and most of Esquesing, while area "E" is basically the present Oakville. Externally, Halton's proposed new boundaries would jut out into Wentworth and Wellington Counties on the west and dip in around the large Erin Mills development on the east; but Nassagaweya, north of 25 Sideroad, would be cut out and given to Wellington County. Halton's municipal councillors will sit down to discuss the TECO report this Saturday.

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Not surprised by report—mayor

Mayor Les Duby is not surprised by the recommendations in the TECO report although he agrees that boundaries proposed by the committee ignore the community of interest.

Acton's big problem as he sees it is that the town is not big enough. Smaller municipalities are ignored when reports such as the TECO committee proposes are drawn up.

Perhaps, he suggested, Acton would be wiser to move in the direction of Guelph and a Wellington regional set-up than remain in the Halton area.

"I'm not talking secession, but what have we got to lose?"

He reiterated that Saturday's meeting of all Halton's municipally elected officials in Milton will reveal more information. It is possible he said, the town could be better off than dealing with Government restrictions. At the same time he said the town has got to make a stab at preservation.

Meanwhile, Milton council held a special meeting Monday and tore the report to shreds.

Esquesing reeve Tom Hill refused to comment, asserting the press should not be in possession of the report until Saturday.

Less strength for north

North Halton's representation at a regional council would be reduced from what it now enjoys in a county system if the Technical Co-ordinating Committee's report on regional government is accepted.

The report recommends the regional council include 23 representatives plus the chairman. Burlington would take in land now known as Puslinch, Waterdown, East Flamborough and part of West Flamborough and two communities would be formed, one with Burlington as its urban core and a second with Waterdown as its urban core.

Burlington would have seven representatives for a population of 80,000 while the new area would have three representatives. Milton and Nassagaweya would be combined for a population of 14,000 and represented by three men, one of which would be the mayor. Acton, Georgetown and Esquesing would be combined for a population of 31,500 and represented by four persons while Oakville, which remains basically the same as it is, would have six representatives for a population of 60,000.

Chairman appointed

The chairman would be appointed by the regional council. Councillors would serve a two year term and according to the report, the term would not be coincidental with the term of the chairman.

Councillors would be elected directly to the regional council. Members should not be elected by wards, the report says. It is felt the election at large would allow the members to take a broader scope of the dealings at the regional council.

Mayors of each of the five communities would automatically become full members of the regional government. It will be up to the mayors to provide liaison between local and regional councils in the two tier system.

The chairman could be appointed either from among the members or as a citizen at large. he was appointed from the council his vacancy could be filled according to provisions in the municipal act.

Each municipality would have at least three representatives, one of which would be the mayor. For the first 15,000 of population each municipality would have three representatives and for each additional 15,000 an additional councillor would be added.

Cartoon booklet produced to discourage 'sniffing'

THE foolishness of sniffing solvents such as nail polish removers, cements, cleaning fluids and other similar substances for the purpose of getting "high" has been pointed out to children in a new two-colour cartoon booklet produced by Chesebrough-Pond's (Canada) Limited in co-operation with the Addiction Research Foundation.

The booklet, in French and English, has been distributed to addiction centres across Canada, and is available to the general public through them. Organizations interested in obtaining re-prints of the booklet can do so by writing to Chesebrough-Pond's at Box 530, Postal Station F, Toronto 5, Ontario.

Aimed at children in the 8 to 14-year-old bracket, the brochure is titled "What's Your Bag". It was produced after a study was conducted with children living in areas where sniffing is prevalent in order to determine the type of message best understood by youngsters. The cartoon format, as presented in the brochure, with a simple straightforward message, was found to be the most effective means of communication.

Chesebrough-Pond's, the manufacturer of Cutex brand nail polish remover, has produced the booklet in an effort to curtail the sniffing of solvents. In addition, the company recently introduced a formula change in Cutex brand nail polish remover to deter abuse of their product.

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Nassagaweya

Council mum

Members of Nassagaweya Council refused to make any comment on a long-awaited report which recommends revamping municipal boundaries and forming a Halton region, during their regular meeting Monday.

Council went into a closed committee meeting to discuss a report by the Halton County Technical Co-Ordinating Committee TECO). Council committee meetings are not open to the public or the press.

The TECO report was given to the various councils in the county over the weekend and released to the press on Monday. In the report the number of municipalities in Halton is reduced from seven to five.

Lose top part

Nassagaweya and Milton are lumped together. The northerly portion of the township would become part of Wellington County.

Authors of the report based their suggestions on the basis of the area's watershed and the Toronto Centered Regional Plan.

Although Council did not discuss the TECO report during regular business, the question of whether to spend money on a two way radio system for the municipality's road vehicles or as part payment for a front end loader, appeared to bring out one councillor's opinions on the matter.

End up in Milton?

Council felt the loader might end up anywhere after the TECO report was implemented. "Probably dusting and gravelling the streets of Milton," snapped Councillor Calvin McIntyre. Council decided to wait until a special meeting is held on Saturday, before deciding on which purchase it should make.

The special meeting will be held at Halton Centennial Manor.

Give bulk of work to region in two-tier plan for county

Division of responsibility as proposed by Halton County's TECO (Technical Co-ordinating) Committee would see a strong regional council with five second tier councils. If adopted, the TECO report would call for the abolition of most committees, boards and commissions now operating in the various municipalities.

"Your committee is strongly of the opinion that the local government can be strengthened in the Halton region by transferring such basic services as planning, taxation and finance, production and distribution of water, collection and treatment of sewage and the purchase and sale of electric power to the region, while retaining those services which are purely local in nature at the local level," says the report.

To further strengthen and to ensure responsible government, the responsibility for the provision of all municipal services should rest entirely in the elected councils. To achieve this it is recommended that all boards, commissions and special bodies be dissolved, except for the Halton County School Boards, the hospital boards and the committees of adjustment.

Official plan

TECO indicates the preparation, adoption and amending of official plans should be a regional function. "The responsibility for determining the best use of all the land within the region must rest with the same authority which is responsible for the supply of basic services, e.g. water, sewer and hydro."

"The establishment of broad development policies, the area to be developed for industrial, commercial, residential and recreational purposes to best serve all of the inhabitants of the region must rest with the region. This would include the approval of subdivision and the signing of subdivision agreements."

Right of appeal

TECO says municipalities should be consulted concerning the official plan and have the right to appeal just as a private citizen would.

"Committees of adjustment should be appointed by the local councils as local citizens would likely have more first hand knowledge of the municipality and its problems."

The report anticipates police being a regional responsibility with the OPP being phased out over a period of five years from areas where they now serve. The OPP cover Acton, Esquesing and Nassagaweya now.

According to the report, fire service should remain local until such time there is a need to replace volunteers with full time firemen. Each local municipality should provide the type of fire service it needs and can afford. As the number of full time firefighters increases, consideration should be given to transferring this function to the region.

Building and plumbing inspection and animal and livestock protection should be done at the local level while emergency measures would be a regional responsibility.

Scrub roads crew

Concerning roads the report indicates that the regional council should have jurisdiction over the construction and reconstruction of regional roads but upon completion of the work, the roads would be the responsibility of the municipal council.

The local municipality would have jurisdiction over its own roads and would maintain regional roads in the community.

If the recommendation was accepted the region would not have its own road-works crew. The report indicated a savings would be found in this manner because of the lack of duplication.

"All matters relating to the supply and production of potable water, including the construction of all watermains, the installation of water services and the billing of customers should be a function of the region. This same statement applies to all matters relating to sanitary sewers also."

The region should try to establish uniform water rates within the entire region so that all users regardless of location would be charged the same rates, says TECO.

Hydro regional

TECO disagrees with a report by various hydro representatives in the county who suggest hydro should remain a local responsibility. The only point from the hydro report which met with TECO approval was the proposed acquisition of rural assets held by Ontario Hydro and the proposed method of financing.

Garbage disposal and drainage would remain local responsibilities, however it is considered that major creek enclosures and flood control works should be a function of the region according to TECO.

Libraries should remain as local responsibility but be reviewed within five years with a view to possibly transferring them to the region.

Museums would become a local responsibility and the Halton Museum should become a responsibility of the new community including Nassagaweya and Milton.

(Continued on Page B3)