



Ombudsman's office to probe grievances over hydro corridor

Citizens along the route of the proposed 500 kV hydro corridor from Bradley Junction to Georgetown were elated by the decision of the Ontario Ombudsman's office last week to investigate why there has been no independent study of the transmission corridor.

William J. Mann, of the Interested Citizens' Group, which has opposed the corridor as being unnecessary, said he had several meetings with the Ombudsman's office before they decided to take the case up.

Investigator Garry Giuliani is reviewing the file on the matter before approaching Ontario Hydro, the Government and the other parties. Mr. Mann said he is feeling

"great" over the Ombudsman's decision and beginning to believe all the effort he has put into the fight to have someone in authority penetrate the bureaucracy at Hydro is bearing fruit.

Although the Interested Citizens have mainly campaigned for an independent study of the corridor, maintaining Hydro could use existing routes for their 500 kV lines, they were almost alone in their fight until the results of a summer Environmental Hearing Board report were published early in 1976, agreeing a Bruce to Essa corridor might be environmentally possible.

The report gave the Interested Citizens' group credibility and prompted Mr. Mann to take the case to the

Ombudsman's office when Energy Minister Dennis Timbrell ordered a start on the corridor from the Milton end and from Bradley Junction, leaving the matter of sealing a route between Colbeck and Limehouse until more public reaction was received as a result of the Environmental Hearing Board's report.

Mann says, however, that Government red tape has discouraged aid from the New Democrats because they believed construction on the corridor had already started when all that's happened is letters have been sent out to people along the corridor. He has told NDP investigators their information about construction is false.

Mann says that has been typical of efforts to acquaint

the Government with facts about the Interested Citizens case. Advisors have been telling the energy minister, for instance, he said, that the route proposed from Bruce to Essa is 21 miles longer than that proposed from Bradley Junction to Georgetown. He discovered the figure included a route to Milton which should not have been there.

The Interested Citizens Group has maintained all along the route they have proposed from Bruce to Essa is shorter and would save Ontario Hydro millions of dollars as well as preserving hundreds of acres of valuable farmland and the aesthetics of the countryside. It would also use existing routes owned by Hydro, making years of battles over land ac-

quisition unnecessary.

However, Energy Minister Dennis Timbrell has told the Interested Citizens no further study of the corridor is warranted because the Government is convinced it would jeopardize the security and stability of the grid system, a statement challenged by John Schneider of the Interested Citizens. He maintains it might have been possible at one time but Hydro's decision to run a corridor to Owen Sound and to Kleinburg from Bruce has provided the security it sought with a Bradley Junction to Georgetown corridor.

As Schneider sees it, the probability of the Government's changing its mind is going to be resolved on a technical plane because when

environment and disturbance are considered, the Interested Citizens' case wins hands down.

He suggests Hydro's methods of systems planning has never taken public wishes or environment into consideration and "for all we know the route from Bradley Junction to Georgetown could have been laid out by some draftsman in the office."

Meanwhile a quick visit by NDP leader Stephen Lewis to the Erin area, has also brought him into the fray. Lewis recognizes the "techno-mozzie is turning neighbor against neighbor." He told Erin Advocate editor Bill Doole he is buying the argument an independent study is required.

The Acton Free Press

One Hundred and First Year - No. 33 ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1976 Thirty Pages—Fifteen Cents

Downtown designation Parking improvements

Pat McKenzie, chairman of Halton Hills Planning Board broke a tie, and cast the deciding vote to recommend to council a by-law allowing downtown Acton to be designated an improved area for parking. The town solicitor was instructed to investigate the possibility.

The motion came after an appeal by Paul Nielsen, representing the Acton Chamber of Commerce and the downtown merchants, for a special mill rate to help finance off street parking.

He explained there was no downtown merchants association, but the retail section of Acton Chamber of Commerce filled the same function.

Councillor Roy Booth said he was concerned about establishing a precedent, and pointed out there are other

commercial areas in Halton Hills who provide their own parking and pay taxes on it.

Councillor Ernie Sykes pointed out special assessment for designated areas is not new, and claimed it is within the municipal statutes.

He said he was glad to hear that, because he thought he must have missed a meeting.

Councillor Les Doby said the situation had to be faced now, since the merchants had already lost parking spaces. "There's no way we should expect the merchants to back off."

Councillor Ric Morrow said he was not prepared to vote since he did not have enough information. He said he agreed with Councillor Hurst and would like to see support from a larger number of merchants. "We might be legislating to collect money from people who don't want to pay them," he remarked. He asked what the answer is to people who provide their own parking and pay taxes on it.

Councillor Harry Levy said he didn't know exactly what is involved, and didn't feel he could support it right now.

Councillor Howitt said notification is sent out, if there

are no objections we proceed with a by-law. He said the town became involved because according to Mr. Nielsen the merchants have been hassling since 1950 about this, "so he is asking us to step in and give them a hand."

"It's not our business," commented Councillor Ric Morrow.

Councillor Roy Booth said this is a request to have council enact a by-law. He said he felt there were not enough merchants represented in the survey, and asked Mr. Nielsen to go back and discuss it with all the merchants.

Not same

Councillor Les Doby said the town cannot go on sticking its head in the sand. "We must show the people we understand the problems they are facing. We didn't have the privilege of a parking authority in Acton, and now we have representation, but the two areas are completely different."

and the conditions are not relevant." He said he would support the motion.

Councillor Ernie Sykes said the motion was not a binding agreement at this point but simply would be investigating what could be done. He said the numbers of merchants made no difference since the Municipal Act controlled the percentage of favorable opinion.

The motion was passed by a one vote margin. Council will vote on the recommendation Monday night.

HIGH SCHOOL OUTERS check their maps to make sure they are heading in the right direction in the Limehouse Conservation Area on Saturday. They were on an Orienteering program. Left to right, Dave Hannah, Don Coats, Jocelyn Lamberink and Carol Buchanan (with back to camera). Story and more pictures inside.

Georgetown man died

Safety improvements for Mill Street rail crossing

As the result of an accident last December in which one Georgetown man was killed and another seriously hurt, the Canadian Transport Commission is proposing a number of safety improvements for the track crossing on Mill Street Acton.

Leonard Chiasson, 23, of 29 John Street, was killed and Colin Gibson, 26 of 51 Main Street was seriously hurt when Gibson's car was struck by a train at the crossing.

Monday Halton Hills works committee decided to comply with a Canadian Transport Commission request for warning signs to be erected for northbound traffic approaching the Mill Street crossing.

The Canadian Transport Commission has been investigating the accident and has suggested the signal lights should have back lights equipped with 70 degree spread lenses so the warning lights will be more easily seen from Wallace Street, Eastern Avenue and Highway 7. The wide lenses would defuse the light out further in more directions.

These improvements are eligible for grants up to 80 per cent of the cost from the railways grade crossing fund.

Railways have been asked by the Canadian Transport Commission to provide estimates of various improvement costs and forward them to the town.

The town will then have to decide if it will share in the cost of making the crossing safer. The town will be asked to kick in for 12 1/2 per cent of the cost.

Councillor Joe Hurst said gates can't be put up at the crossing.

Councillor Ern Hyde observed the signal often lasts up to 15 minutes and people

become impatient and sneak across the tracks.

Hurst said there are about two accidents at the tracks each year and noted the problem isn't people sneaking across but people who aren't paying attention just driving into trains.

He described the crossing as one of the worst in Ontario. Hurst noted when the snow is blowing it is very difficult to see a freight train at night.

Hyde pointed out bells clang and lights flash at the crossing.

Hurst said the Canadian

Transport Commission's suggestions were the only means of making the crossing safe, short of installing gates or building an underpass.

Councillor Dick Howitt suggested the crossing will be even more dangerous if GO trains ever go to Acton and Guelph.

Engineer Robert Austin noted when the trains come along they are going at a high speed activate the signals and then slow down. He thought this was one reason the signals are on so long.

Despite the plea for off street parking, Mr. Nielsen made it clear merchants did not favor the banning of parking on the south side of Mill Street from Main to Eastern Avenue. He claimed the ban would result in a loss of 59 parking spots. He said, "Some people who have paid dearly for their parking facilities are still willing to go along with a special mill rate to create more parking. If the downtown area is to survive we must have more parking."

Highway collision

There were high snowbanks along the side of the road, and ice and snow on Highway No. 7 when a collision occurred Monday, February 9 about 5:30 p.m.

Drivers involved were Dan McTavish, R.R. 1, Limehouse, who has about \$800 damage to his car, and Frank Routhen, R.R. 1, Limehouse, with about \$15 damage to the jeep he was driving. Mr. Routhen had a snowplow blade on his jeep.

Contacted 30

Mr. Nielsen said he had only been able to contact 30 merchants, and received 17 in favor, two against and the remainder undecided, on the special mill rate. He claimed the benefitting merchants would be willing to pay up to an extra 20 mills over five years for parking facilities.

In reply to a question from Councillor Harry Levy, Mr. Nielsen said there were 76 people involved, but he had only time to contact 30.

are no objections we proceed with a by-law. He said the town became involved because according to Mr. Nielsen the merchants have been hassling since 1950 about this, "so he is asking us to step in and give them a hand."

"It's not our business," commented Councillor Ric Morrow.

Councillor Roy Booth said this is a request to have council enact a by-law. He said he felt there were not enough merchants represented in the survey, and asked Mr. Nielsen to go back and discuss it with all the merchants.

Not same

Councillor Les Doby said the town cannot go on sticking its head in the sand. "We must show the people we understand the problems they are facing. We didn't have the privilege of a parking authority in Acton, and now we have representation, but the two areas are completely different."

Ice, white-outs smother roads

People who left the district Saturday have a variety of tales to tell of trying to reach home again. The white-outs caused by high winds and snow squalls in the north were unexpected, and many found themselves stormstayed and unprepared for it!

One carload which left Acton at 7 p.m. Saturday evening didn't arrive home to Collingwood until 9 the next morning.

A convoy of cars returning from the Pee Wee tournament took four hours to make

Centre toured

Regional councillors toured the future location of the Community Services centre on Tuesday, to see first hand what the local committee is proposing. Representatives of the board of directors of the new centre will attend a meeting of regional council when grants are considered later this month.

A Presentation has already been made the administration committee of the region.

Councillors touring the two rooms in the Y Monday were Mayor Tom Hill, Ernie Sykes, Dick Howitt, Ric Morrow and Marjorie Powys, as well as G. W. McKenzie who is on the board of directors of the centre.

A grant of \$3,000 has already been received from Halton Hills. Officials of the provincial government indicated they would match the grant given by Halton region. To cover the budget, \$6,000 would be required from the region and the province.

Plans for a co-ordinator are proceeding tentatively.

Discuss alternatives to St. Alban's parking

Halton Hills works committee will ask council to hold off on the third reading of a by-law prohibiting parking on the south side of St. Alban's Drive to see if a partial ban would work just as well.

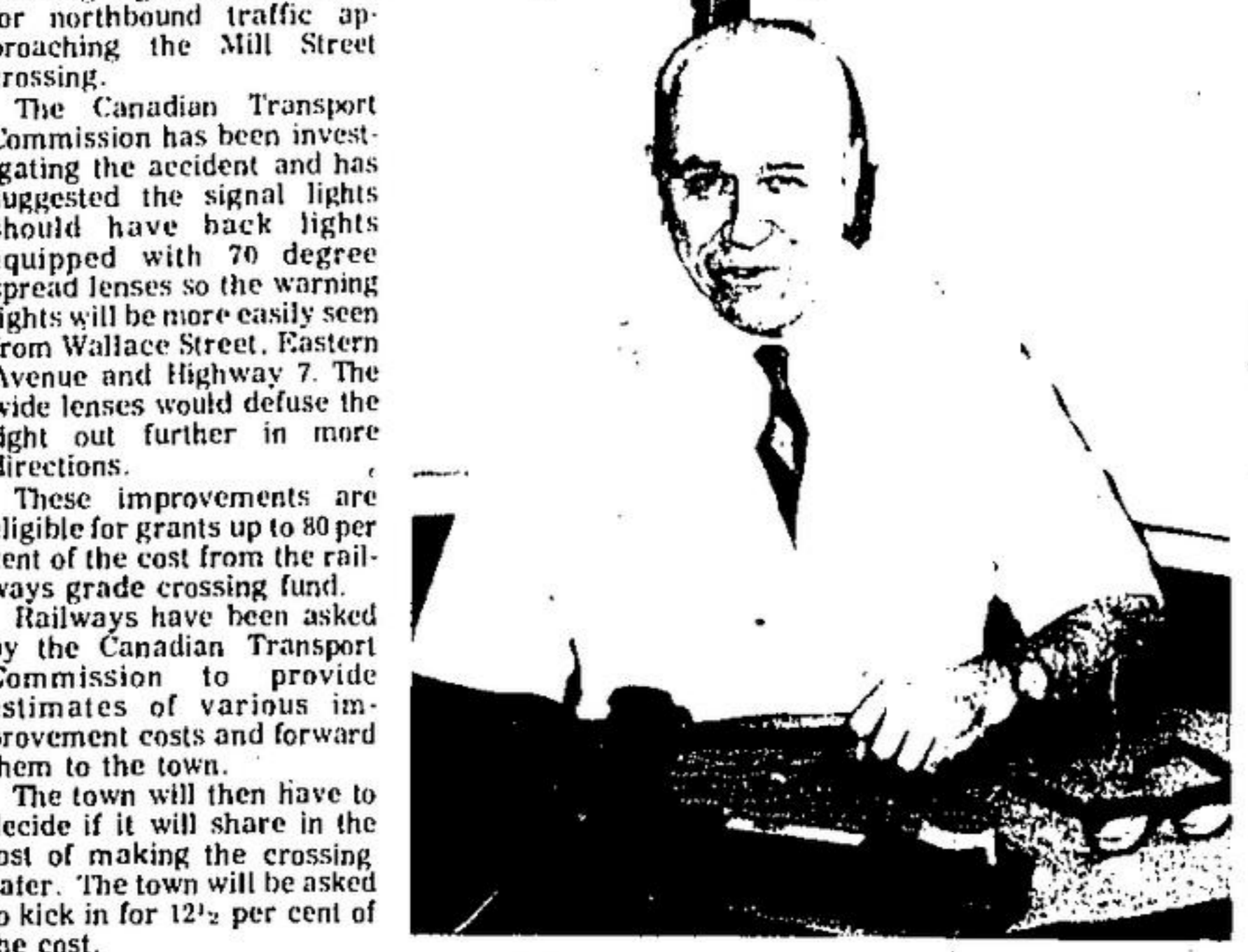
Lorne Doberthien, President L and L Ford Sales, told the committee Monday if parking is completely banned it will hurt his business because there will be no place for service customers to park.

He promised his employees won't be parking on the street anymore and suggested some of the problems would be solved on the street if snow was removed.

Councillor Joe Hurst noted the problem exists in the summer too and reminded the committee complaints have been coming in for some time from residents who can't get in and out of their driveways.

Mr. Hurst suggested a three hour parking limit for Main Street and thought L and L service customers could park there.

Mr. Doberthien said he wants to move but so much land is tied up in Acton he doesn't think he will be able to



WIELDING THE GAVEL that played a major part in his municipal life is Frank Oakes, well-known Acton vet. What do vets do in their spare time? See the first page of the second section of today's Free Press.

Discuss alternatives to St. Alban's parking

set up shop anywhere else for two years. When he bought the business in 1972 his trade wasn't as brisk as it is now.

Councillor Ern Hyde noted L and L Ford pays business taxes and the town should try to give him a break and some breathing room.

It was suggested parking be banned on St. Alban's Drive only in the vicinity of Willow Street and leave parking available on St. Alban's Drive across from L and L Ford.

The committee will investigate this possibility before allowing the third reading of the by-law.

Wolf pelt added to trapper's pile



THERE IS one less wolf to molest farm animals in Erin Township since this one was shot last week on a farm near the Erin-Halton Hills Townline. Trapper George Allan, R. R. 2, Acton, is shown with the wolf which was given to him for its pelt.

Wolf pelt added to trapper's pile

When trapper George Allan, R. R. 2, Acton, bundled up his pelt and shipped them off to auction at the Trappers' Convention to be held at North Bay this week, he didn't anticipate that within a few days he would be adding a wolf skin to his list of pelts.

Wednesday evening Warren Saunders, who raises beef cattle on his farm on the fifth line Erin, just above the Erin-Halton Hills Townline, caught sight of four wolves out behind his barn. Quickly he got his rifle, loaded it and set out on his snowmobile.

When he was withing 70 yards he shot one which he later presented to Mr. Allan.

This is not the first time Mr. Saunders has seen wolves on his property. Last summer there were six of them in among the cattle. It is thought that the deer, which inhabit the area of hardwood extending from the fourth line to the rear of his farm, lure the wolves to the region.

Blackest

The wolf was not a timber wolf but a type of coyote, according to Mr. Allan. These vary in colour, most being

gray brown or reddish. However, this was "the blackest wolf I've ever seen," he said.

When the wolf is skinned, the pelt will be stretched and dried before it is shipped to auction. Wolf skins when purchased are clipped, dyed and used for making coats.

Trapper Allan will drive to North Bay to attend the Convention himself on February 14, 15 and 16. Already he has sent 130 raccoon con pelts and 14 mink which were auctioned earlier this week. Last year the price for coon was about \$18 a pelt, but

this year the average price is \$25.50. The top price he has ever received for a coon skin was \$39.

From U.S.

The auctions in North Bay are held every month from November to April. Those selling pelts are mostly Ontario trappers though occasionally Americans will travel up from the South with a load of opossum skins.

Then, too, there are two fellows who often come up from Minnesota with their pelts which are chiefly raccoon. The volume is quite

awe-inspiring when one considers 36,708 raccoon skins and 43,331 beaver in a single month, not to mention other varieties of fur.

Mr. Allan, who was raised on the second line north of Acton, now Highway 25, has been operating traplines for the past 30 or 35 years. He started as a schoolboy digging out skunks and selling them for their skins which in those days fetched a fair price.

Now he is one of four trappers operating lines in three townships, Erin, Halton

Hills and one in Peel County.

He sets out his lines at the first of November and does the majority of his trapping between Christmas and New Year. If the traps are left much later they will freeze in, he explains.

Sometimes he uses snowshoes when tending the lines but mostly he resorts to his snowshoes when hunting later in the winter when there is a good crust on the snow.

Part of that fur-trimmed coat in the shop may have originated in the woods near Acton.