

# Equalized sewage assessment eases Acton taxes

The decision Monday night by Halton Hills council to equalize sewage costs in the two urban areas of the town has added \$6.75 to the average Georgetown ratepayer's bill this year and sliced \$8.38 from the average Acton taxpayer's bill.

Committee of the whole council chairman Ern Hyde broke the tie vote on the equalization question resulting in the average taxpayer in both urban areas paying \$42.90 for sewage plant expansion debts and maintenance this year. This move will mean future costs, resulting from expansion of both the Georgetown and Acton

plants, will be split evenly among taxpayers in both areas.

Council overturned a finance committee recommendation which would have seen Acton residents pay \$67.91 for sewage services and Georgetown residents \$33.37 this year.

Councillor Pat McKenzie lead the move to equalized assessment for sewers noting if Halton Hills is to truly become one town such a move was necessary.

Councillor Ric Morrow countered Halton Hills councillors at the region, including McKenzie, had voted against equalized assessment on the

basis it would mean the north was paying for developments in the south.

He warned sewage costs would be high enough for Georgetown taxpayers without also having to help Acton pay their bills.

Morrow wondered how Halton Hills could consider equalized assessment when the region had turned it down and decided each municipality should pay its own bills.

"I won't vote to further damage Georgetown taxpayers. Acton will benefit from this. We can't say no equalization at the regional level and have equalization here. You just can't have it both

ways," he declared.

McKenzie wondered why it was all right to have one set rate for items like recreation and not for sewers, too.

Councillor Les Duby said it was a tough question to come to grips with especially since Halton Hills is unique in having two fully serviced urban areas. He said equalized rates would be the best thing for the entire town.

Councillor Harry Levy objected saying each item of the town expenditure should be looked at individually to see who pays the bills. He warned Acton would benefit from such a plan at the expense of Georgetown and suggested

there was no way Halton Hills should equalize assessment when the region isn't.

Councillor Dick Howitt said both the region and Halton Hills started systems of chargebacks for sewers and the region is sticking to the system and so should Halton Hills.

He said comparisons of equalized assessments for things like crossing guards and street lighting were invalid because they didn't come close to the cost of a sewage treatment plant expansion.

He said if a specific area of the town wanted something then its taxpayers should pay

for it and not expect other areas to share the cost.

Councillor Joe Hurst said the problem of equalized assessment was a difficult one to solve since the debate surrounded the question of who will benefit most in the long run.

He said comparison with the region was wrong since it involved four municipalities instead of just one. Hurst emphasized Halton Hills is one town now.

"Are we going to charge people in ward four of Georgetown more than those in ward three of Georgetown just because ward four gets more benefits? We are one

town now and should have uniform rates throughout," Hurst said.

Councillor Russ Miller agreed the town should have one rate and warned to continue splitting rates up was a bad policy.

Morrow said the town of Halton Hills has been around for over two years now and right at the start of its formation councillors had agreed what items should be a shared cost and what items should be charged back to the individual wards.

"We decided all this right at the start on the basis of fairness. All of a sudden costs change so we decide to chan-

ge what is a fair and objective policy," Morrow charged.

Howitt said if such a policy was extended to all items Esquering residents would end up paying for street lights and crossing guards.

"Our philosophy has always been you don't pay for services you don't get," he said.

Hyde ended the debate by stating he was in favor of equalized assessment in the interests of Halton Hills becoming truly one town.

The two other possible ways of handling sewage costs suggested by treasurer Raymond King would have seen Acton taxpayers paying either \$67.91 this year or \$51.23 and Georgetown ratepayers \$33.37 with both plans. The Acton rate would have been reduced under plan two by the payment of \$35,000 from lot levies towards the Acton sewer debt.

(Councillors McKenzie, Hurst and Duby have discussed sewer rates together and agree the equalized charge would be in the best interests of Acton. They think one sewer rate and eventually one water rate are inevitable.)

# The Acton Free Press.

One Hundred and First Year—No. 50 ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 1976 Thirty Pages—Fifteen Cents.



REV. RUSSELL FINLEY and wife Jessie pose in Ebenezer United Church Sunday, when friends and guest helped them celebrate his 25th anniversary in the ministry. Rev. Finley is also starting his tenth year as minister for Ebenezer, Eden Mills and Arkell. Rev. Finley, from Saskatchewan, also served churches at Hamilton, Smithfield, Hannon, Chatsworth and Deseronto. Story on the district page.

## Will hire lawyer

### Farmers unite to fight Hydro expropriation

Farmers effected by the 500 kV hydro corridor which will cut through the heart of Halton Hills have decided to join together, hire a lawyer, and fight Ontario Hydro at provincial expropriation inquiry hearings.

At a meeting held at Stewarttown Hall on June 1, 70 residents, whose property lies in the path of the hydro corridor or live close to the line, unanimously voted to raise funds necessary for legal assistance when fighting Hydro when it tries to expropriate their land.

With the urging of area farmers Pierre Pilote and Walter Scott, the crowd decided each of the 55 property owners over whose land the line will go, should contribute a minimum of \$50 towards the legal fund to fight Hydro. Anyone with more than 50 acres of land will be assessed \$1 an acre as their contribution.

In addition, the estimated 150 property owners who are within sight of the line will also be encouraged to contribute to the fund and fight Hydro.

Halton Hills Councillor and Georgetown lawyer Dick Howitt told the farmers they have a tough fight ahead of them but they can still stop the corridor.

He informed the audience that everyone who has received an expropriation notice from Hydro must within 30 days write to the Minister of Energy requesting a hearing before the expropriation enquiry officer.

"I would urge you to stick together and present a united front. Don't have just a few

(Continued on Page 5)



THE ALUMINUM ROOF of Don Hepburn's barn collapsed in sections as fire raged through stocks of hay and grain Monday afternoon. Firefighters from Acton, Rockwood and Milton attended the blaze on Sideroad 30 just west of the Guelph Line.

## New middle school? few interested Mon.

A public meeting was held Monday to explain to interested people how Acton schools will be re-organized to include a middle school.

The interested people who attended numbered 31 and included: four principals, one vice-principal, one school board trustee, two board staff, five teachers, two reporters and three children.

The remaining 13 were parents.

The small group gathered at the front of the gym, leaving rows of vacant chairs.

High school principal Dean Fink chaired the meeting and called upon his experience at Centennial middle school in Georgetown as he explained the new concept for Acton. He also showed slides of rooms and activities at Centennial.

Present: Centennial principal Ron Chatten, a teacher and a couple of students had come to assist in discussion groups, but they weren't needed.

He said School board trustee Tom Watson said he had fought hard for a new school for Acton and he's "sold" on the middle school concept.

He expressed his disappointment at the crowd and wondered if the reason was apathy, or if people are satisfied?

He said he wanted to get the feelings of Acton people to take back to the school board.

Keith Craig, executive assistant to the director, spoke to the group and answered many questions. He reviewed Acton's situation - overcrowding, portables at all schools, the building of the new high school. It looks as if the stone school will be a separate school, he added.

When the new high school opens in September 1977 all the town's grade 6, 7 and 8 students will go to the old high school, then a middle school.

Mr. Craig said no bus transportation will be provided to the new middle school.

Some of the parents felt the walk is long from Cobblehill or Kingham, for children as young as 10.

The distance is comparable to others walked elsewhere in the county by children the same age, Mr. Craig said.

Tom Watson pointed out the provincial distances allowed are one and a quarter miles for kindergarten children, two miles to an elementary school and three to a high school. Halton's distances allowed are less, he said. The distance to the new middle school would be no more than a mile and half from any house presently occupied, he stated.

It was pointed out that Tyler bus has a separate arrangement with some parents to drive their children from Kingham Hills to the Robert Little school.

(Continued on Page 2)



MOMENTARILY FLOATING on the air is Glenn Van Ryk who broke a Robert Little School record clearing the high jump at five feet, one inch last Thursday. Glenn is an intermediate. Field day results and other sports in the second section.

## Pigs rescued while barn burns

Firefighters from Rockwood, Acton and Milton Fire Departments responded Monday afternoon when fire broke out in a pig barn at the farm of Donald James Hepburn on 30 Sideroad west of Guelph Line.

The barn was destroyed and some straw and feed stored in the upstairs of the barn was also lost, but the family managed to rescue 150 pigs housed in the concrete block foundation of the barn.

Milton Fire Department reported no estimate of the loss has yet been set.

Rockwood firefighters were first on the scene and Acton also responded under a mutual aid agreement with Milton. The fire was in Milton, however, so the Milton firefighters were called to stand by and let the other brigades return to the hall. Firefighters remained on the scene from 4:30 to 11:30 p.m., then later in the night they were called out again when the smouldering barn flared up.

Water was obtained from a pool on the farm.

Milton Fire Chief A. E. Clement said he understands the barn's contents are insured. No cause has been determined.

Kelty Hepburn, daughter of the farm owner, was burned on one arm during the fire. And to top off a busy evening, a 1951 pumper Milton Fire Department sent to the fire broke down on the way home from the blaze.

# Council shoots down plebiscite on complex

A bid by Councillor Ric Morrow, backed by Councillors Harry Levy and George Maltby, to ask the voters if they want an \$850,000 municipal complex, was defeated at Monday night's meeting of Halton Hills council.

Morrow urged the question be put to a plebiscite, on a municipal election ballot. He asked all work by the architect to cease until the voters made the decision.

He said he was deeply concerned about costs in the next few years. He reminded council of the sewage plant added costs, and pointed out within three years another \$150,000 a year would be added for carrying costs.

He said this year's town budget had been kept to a reasonable increase only because of an infusion of \$300,000 from last year's surplus. He said \$200,000 for the repair of the

old arena, had not been considered in the overall total.

"We haven't responded to the serious need for library facilities in Georgetown. While we are considering more than \$800,000 for a municipal complex, and \$80,000 just for architect's fees, we haven't done anything about adding one square foot of space for books or a library."

Morrow contended the location of the municipal complex at the Seventh Line site was short-sighted, since there would be no room to expand. "Ten years from now we'll be branded as idiots for doing it."

He urged council to stop the building now and "get your priorities straight, because we can't really afford what we're doing."

Councillor Les Duby said he was not too proud of

anything council had done in the last two and a half years, "but we had no choice." He said council had been spending money right and left. "As a member of the committee for the new municipal administration property every time I have tried to determine the best of many alternatives." He said the committee is being shot down on every issue.

Duby claimed a centralized administration building was necessary for a unified town.

Councillor Ern Hyde claimed there was room for expansion on the site. "We are one municipality and I want to make it work." He claimed a centralized building with all the departments together was necessary. He termed the attempt to put the question to a plebiscite as "procrastinating and passing the buck."

## Architect's fees \$77,000

### Call meeting about block parents' plan

Halton Hills council approved payment of \$19,323 to architects Halford and Wilson, as a fourth of their fee for the design of the proposed municipal complex on the Seventh line.

The building has not yet been approved, but council have authorized the design.

Councillor Harry objected to the payment saying he was told the architect's fees would be \$32,000. "Now we're up to over \$77,000."

Councillors Levy and Morrow opposed the payment.

Efforts to soon set up the town's first block parents' program are moving in two directions, says a project organizer.

Lonnie Harkins, who is undertaking the project, said pamphlets explaining the block parent idea may be going home Friday with school children from kindergarten to grade three.

Also there will be a meeting of volunteers to set up a steering committee.

The meeting is slated for 7:30 p.m. on June 16 at the Community Services Centre in the Y building.

Mrs. Harkins, who has done some research into the idea of block parents, said that a program is very simple to run once it is set in motion.

Two or three block parents on each street will cut crime and deter child molesting, Mrs. Harkins said.

People will be able to sign up for the program at the meeting.

Interested parties can contact Mrs. Harkins in the evenings at 853-1453 or Community Services Centre co-ordinator Judy McIn during the day at 853-3310.

## Sgt. Hilton to head precinct

Staff Sgt. Bernie Ward, who has been in charge of the Acton precinct of the Halton Regional Police since Sept. 1, is leaving his post here Friday. He will return to the detachment in Burlington, where he lives.

He will be replaced by Sgt. Dick Hilton, who has been with the Georgetown precinct since April 1975. Prior to that he was with the Oakville police detachment. Sgt. Hilton lives in Mississauga. He starts here Friday.



Sgt. Bernie Ward

## Fairview chapel?

There is a good possibility a chapel will be built in Fairview cemetery, but the donor of the proposed building wishes to remain anonymous at this time.

Halton Hills council Monday approved a resolution asking the treasury department to apply for the approval of the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. The location must be approved but no holdup is expected.

Council has already approved the chapel in principle. It would be located in the north-east corner, to the left of the entrance gates.