

OMB states disapproval of bylaw prohibiting Rockwood development

by Kerry Chalmers

The Ontario Municipal Board has ruled that a zoning change made by the Eramosa Township Council was unnecessary and unreasonable. The council re-zoned a parcel of land, 32 acres in the extreme north-east corner of the village, from residential to agricultural after J. K. W. Developments had purchased this land as residential at residential prices.

Berton Scharf, a local resident and owner of Supreme Realty, is owner of J. K. W. Developments and was affected by this down-zoning that prohibited development for residential uses and zoned it for agricultural uses.

The O. M. B. felt that the main thrust of council's action was to discourage the submission of proposals for subdivisions until such time as a property could develop with

full municipal services. They added that a restricted area by-law however should be for the purpose of controlling, deferring or preventing development, especially undesirable development and should not be used for the purpose of restricting the rights of land owners to submit development proposals. They also felt that the by-law did not increase the control over the development of subject lands.

Official plan

The Village of Rockwood presently falls under the Official Plan for the Guelph and Suburban Planning area subject to the Urban Growth Policies for Hamlet Areas. These policies indicate that future development be limited to infilling and rounding out by very limited expansion of the urban nuclei and that any other plans would require an amendment to this plan. The Board pointed out that

when the water and sewers are in fact installed, the village shall no longer be subject to this plan and the policy respecting major expansion of the urban nuclei would not apply.

The Board stated that, "it was not impressed with a planning scheme that stops development of any lands within the municipality that are ready for development, can be developed and the development is shown to be

the ultimate and best use of the land, for the sole purpose of encouraging the like development of other lands that may not be ready for development, may not be available for development and for which proposals for development may not be submitted for a number of years if at all."

Unreasonable

The Board felt that since council had knowledge at the time of the passing that the

installation of services had been finalized and that the services were definitely going to be installed, their action was unreasonable and as a result the Board would not approve the by-law.

Berton Scharf stated in a recent interview that this action had cost him thousands of dollars and many, many hours and added that the uncertainty of the last year has had adverse effects on his family.

"I can understand and appreciate the concern of the township in wanting to ensure the best type of development for the village and area people now that the services are being installed," he said, "and I am willing to do my part to see that my proposed development would be an asset to the community."

Needs development

Mr. Scharf feels the village of Rockwood needs development in order to help pay for the facilities it requires such as the proposed Community Centre and that development would assist in paying for the water and sewer services. He also explained that a developer could make allowances in subdivision plans for something that is needed by the village. The law states that 5 per cent of the land be developed as parkland or the value of that land be paid to the municipality. Mr. Scharf feels that approval for more commercial property has been allowed when in effect there aren't enough people to accommodate the commercial stores Rockwood already has.

"I feel that not all infilling will be done for years because everyone wants to build on their extra lot or sell their lot to be built on," he said.

Mr. Scharf explained that his intentions were never to build 100 homes overnight but to develop this property over a period of at least five years.

"I am retaining Andrei Derkowski from R. V. Anderson and Associates, Planners to re-draft the plans in the village's best interests and I intend to see that he does just that," he explained. He will be representing me and re-submitting my application to Eramosa Township in the near future."

In summing up his thought on the events of the past year Mr. Scharf concluded, "I like Rockwood and I want to stay here and build a home overlooking the ravine. I did not move here with the thought of

developing the land, making a fast dollar and then leaving town!"

Reeve comments

Reeve Bill Adsett spoke of the feelings of council in a phone interview. "I think council fears wholesale onslaught development," he said, "and this was our thinking in the use of the holding by-law". Mr. Adsett felt it was unfortunate that the rezoning coincided with the announcement that the agreement for the installation of services had been finalized. "The rezoning had been in the mill for sometime and although it was awkward, the by-law and announcement coincided," he explained.

The Reeve stressed that although the by-law was disapproved, development will not be allowed for sometime. The council was informed of the O.M.B. verdict at last night's council meeting.

village" he said, "and as the O. M. B. indicated there must be growth and it is not reasonable to stop growth."

The Reeve spoke of some difficulties encountered in other towns that had allowed for rapid growth and pointed out that new development can be costly and that one of those chief costs is the need for increased school facilities.



GUIDES SURROUND one of the giant English bulldogs at the entrance of Court Cliff Park. Left back, Shelley Spencer, Dianne Clark, Susan Johnson, middle row, Lisa Petty, Debbie Finlay, Michelle Patterson, Susan Bilton, Laurie Jamieson, Wendy Galley, Shari Thatcher, right front, Cindy Loughton, Susan Hawkins, Laura Jansen and Colleen Petty.

Free Press Rockwood and District

Birthday party for Mrs. Perry

Mrs. Grace Perry was the guest of honor last Friday night at St. John's Parish Hall when 70 neighbours and friends gathered to help celebrate her birthday. The hall was decorated with pink and white streamers and lovely red roses, contributed by Arthur Thomas out of his garden, adorned the tables. The cake made by Saunders was enjoyed along with assorted cakes and squares.

An antique silver tea and coffee service was brought by one of the ladies to be used and a record player supplied the background music. Mrs. Vincent Price poured tea and Mrs. Jack Brittain, Mrs. Edna Ewers and Mrs. Ivy Ritchie poured coffee. Among the senior members who attended were Mrs. Dean, Mrs. Saunders Sr., Mrs. Little and Arthur Thomas.

The birthday party was enjoyed by all and Mrs. Perry gave a speech of thanks to her many friends at the close of the evening.

Album

Don Hillis took some photographs of the party and he and his wife Winnie presented Mrs. Perry with a photo album this week with a number of pictures of Mrs. Perry and her late husband. A guest book from the party and birthday cards from the evening will be added to the album as a memorable keepsake.



GRACE PERRY sits in front of the beautiful cake made in honor of her 83rd birthday.

Story hour at library

The library is initiating a new program starting Saturday, July 10—a story-hour for children on Saturday mornings from 10-11 a.m. All preschool children must be accompanied by a parent who will stay with the child for the hour. Parents must also be in attendance to receive other children when the story hour is over.

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Official opening

The Hortop Mill is completed now and plans are underway for an official opening of the renovated building.

Eramosa township councillor John Hewitt, in charge of the restoration committee, said he would like to have a meeting with the Grand River Conservation Authority about the opening.

Mr. Hewitt said he hopes to have an official opening with dignitaries from the Black Creek Pioneer Village, Ministry of the Environment, and Wellington member of parliament Jack Johnson, who was instrumental in getting the Local Initiatives Project grant for the work.

Deputy-reeve Betty Lou Clark suggested the women in the historical society could serve the luncheon.

Reeve Bill Adsett inquired when the opening could be, and wondered about a Sunday afternoon. Mrs. Clark said however, that some people head up north to cottage country on the weekends and thought the visiting dignitaries would rather have the opening during the week, when they are getting paid to go.

She said a plaque for the building is on order, but it is not known whether it will be ready in time for the opening.

Rockwood roundup

Swim lessons are available in Rockwood Park. Preschoolers right through to adults are able to take programs based on the Y-course. The fee is \$4 and certificates are offered at the end of the 10-week course. For further information call 856-9543.

Sheldon and Florence Trousdale entertained old friends this past week, John Dunphy and his wife from Dorval, Quebec. Mr. Dunphy has led rather an unusual life and at one time studied the universal language, Esperanto. His mother, a nurse, as a point of interest

Suggest by-pass

Traffic problems in Eden Mills have been recognized by the Eramosa township council.

At Monday's meeting, a letter from Mrs. Ralph Thompson was received expressing concern over the number of car accidents on the county road winding through the village.

She explained that in the 21 years she has lived in the village, she has seen numerous car accidents in front of her home and in front of the Presbyterian church. She continued to say that cars go off the road, through the ditch and end up on her front lawn.

By-pass

Mrs. Thompson recommended a by-pass around the village similar to the one around Stewarttown outside Georgetown.

Councillor Dave Masson said that four years ago the

was part of the exciting Gold Rush to the Klondike in 1898. Mr. Trousdale and his wife enjoyed the visit very much.

All contributions to this column are welcome. Feel free to call me and discuss news items at 856-4890. If I don't know about it I can't print it. We are renovating our home so please let the phone ring a number of times so I can hear it above the din. You can also send news items to me c/o P. O. 134, Rockwood.

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