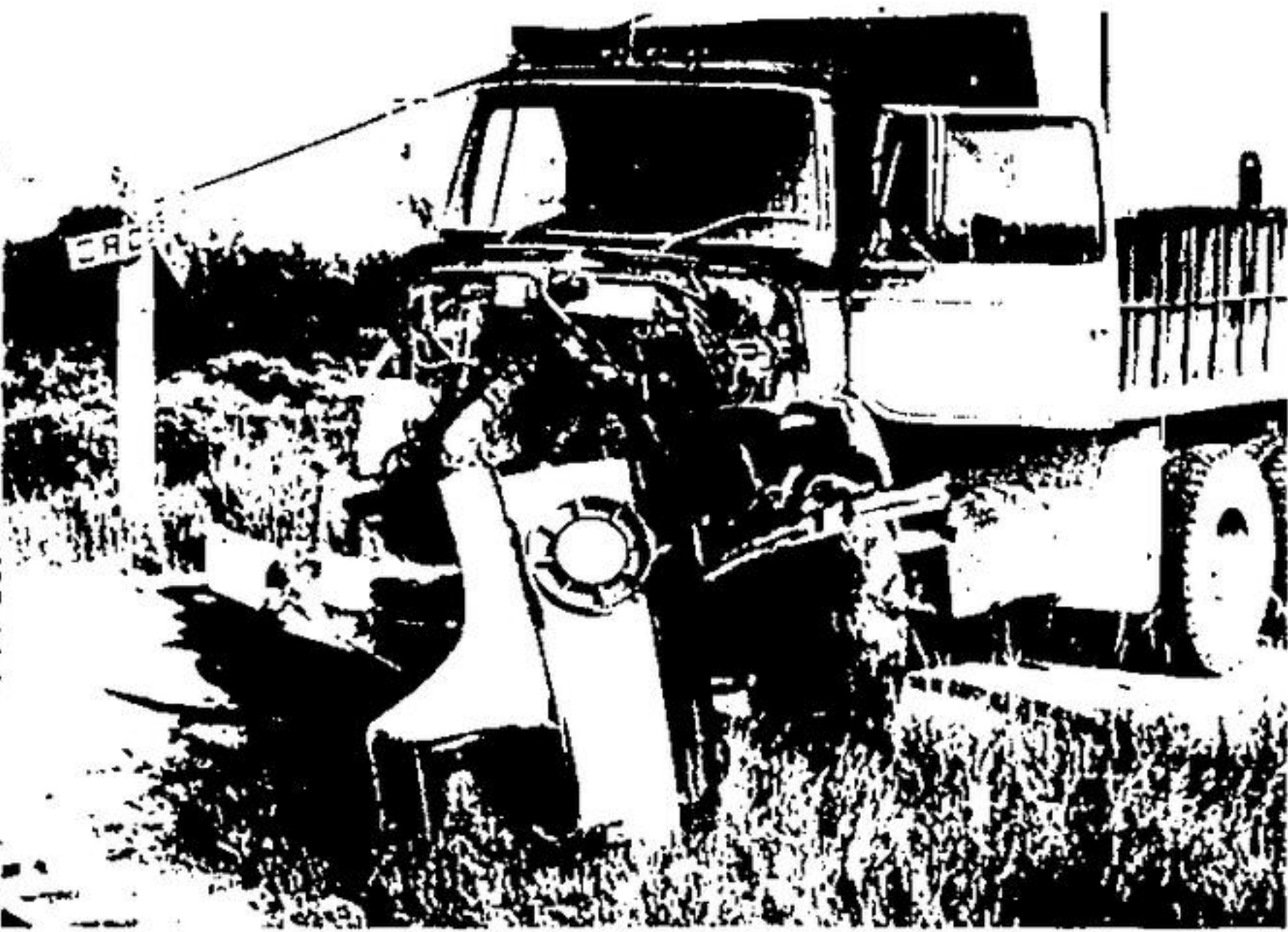




A FEW PASSENGERS in the front car of CN's dayliner said they felt a bump, but that was all when the morning train and a truck collided about a mile west of Acton on a crossing. Police estimate that \$2,000 damage was done to the steps and cowling of the train. The train sat just east of Crewson's Corners for about an hour and a half following the accident. Police say charges are pending.



TRUCK DRIVER John Ramsey, of Rockwood, escaped with minor injuries when his dump truck and a CN commuter train collided at Crewson's Corners last Thursday morning. Milton OPP estimate damage to the truck at about \$4,000. Mr. Ramsey was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital at Guelph and treated and released. Commuters were late for work due to the crash.

Decision to buy Hotchen Bakery back to Authority

"This whole thing is premature," finance committee chairman Ernie Sykes told Acton delegations at Monday night's committee meeting. Seven people were present concerning the possible offer to purchase from council for Hotchen's bakery property, to be turned into a town parking lot.

Mr. Sykes explained to the delegations they should take their case to the parking authority which was set up by council and has responsibility for both Acton and Georgetown. He suggested the authority should see to it that all merchants are contacted. The parking authority should then bring a recommendation to the finance committee which would forward its recommendation to full council.

At last week's council meeting the third reading of a bylaw authorizing the town to take an option on the property was held up when Bert Hinton spoke on the matter to council.

More input

Since he had been referred to the committee by council, Bert Hinton said he wished a presentation made, and introduced Bill Yundt.

Mr. Yundt told the committee as a whole the downtown merchants are not opposed to off street parking, but he felt there should be

more input. We have never really been shown there is a parking problem.

Some cars park on the main, side and back streets all day long, he said. He suggested stricter enforcement of the two hour parking and extending it.

Questions

What will the cost be? How many mills? For how long? he wondered. He said some people provide their own parking; should they pay the same amount?

As for the survey of merchants, he questioned who had been asked to approve. A decision cannot be based on tenants voting Yes as opposed to landowners, he said.

He told the committee he felt there would be enough willing merchants and businessmen to put up money to buy the property and hold it. If it is sold to someone else it would never be available for parking again.

He said there had been poor communications between business people involved.

Modern

Mr. Hinton said modern thinking has municipalities recognizing the need for off street parking, as a facility for the use of the public in general. The proposed lot in Acton could be also used for church and lodge parking.

He suggested the cost could be covered on a ward one

basis. He also said that in Acton, a commercial assessment is substantial about three million dollars—and some of it should be returned to keep the community healthy. "I don't think you can suck out all the taxes in downtown Acton without doing something to keep the downtown going."

Signed

Mike Kinal of Home Hardware had also contacted the town office and been placed on the agenda for the meeting. He spoke briefly on behalf of the merchants "who are well informed and aware of the work of (assistant planner) Ron Burnett."

He said 41 have signed that they are willing to be assessed. Tenants who approve the plan are willing to pay higher rent.

He suggested further discussion should be left until Paul Nielsen returns from abroad.

For the last 15 years merchants have been trying to get more parking in Acton, he said.

Two hats

John Coniglio was rebuked by chairman Sykes as he interrupted the presentations. He was not on the agenda and declared he was there as a private citizen.

In explaining the procedure to be followed, chairman Sykes pointed out Paul

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The Acton Free Press

One Hundred and Second Year—No. 4

ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 1976

Eighteen Pages—Fifteen Cents

Town complex fading fast

A strong taxpayer protest appears to have sent the proposed \$900,000 expansion of the Esquing municipal offices on the Seventh Line down the drain since the majority of councillors no longer support the plan. Seven councillors now oppose a complex being built at this time.

In an interview this week, councillors Mike Armstrong and Russ Miller, who were both away when the

municipal complex vote was taken, voiced their opposition to spending the nearly \$1 million at this time.

Armstrong and Miller have now joined Mayor Tom Hill, Councillors Harry Levy, George Maltby, Roy Booth and Ric Morrow in opposing the complex. Hill, Levy, Maltby Booth and Morrow have all voiced strong objections to spending the money for the complex and voted against it.

In interviews this week, Councillors Ernie Sykes, Dick Ilwitt, Les Doby and Pat McKenzie all indicated the fact about 1,500 residents have signed petitions against the complex hasn't changed their previous stand in favor of building the complex. Councillor Joe Hurst who voted for the complex was unavailable for comment since he is away on holidays.

Armstrong said if the complex comes up to vote again at council he will vote against it since it hasn't been determined how the town can raise the necessary funds.

He said he has always been in favor of the Seventh Line location and supported hiring an architect to design the expansion but felt the plan

shouldn't go further until the town had established where the money was coming from. "I support the choice of location 100 per cent. It could still be built next year, the year after that, even five years from now," he said.

He said he never intended to vote for proceeding with the project until the origin of the funds were established. Armstrong added the town has been spending too much money.

"With the number of objections there are from the ratepayers I don't think the Ontario Municipal Board will rule that the town can go ahead and build the complex. I think the whole thing will die a natural death now," he said.

Miller said if given the

chance he will vote against the complex.

"Our spending has been excessive. We are putting the cart before the horse. The money for the complex should be found before we proceed with building it. The well is almost dry," he said.

Miller still thinks a municipal complex is a priority project for the town and warned the cost will be more than \$900,000 if the proposal is shelved but added "everything can't be done in one year."

He is concerned about ratepayers protesting the complex because of rising taxes and planning councillors for the tax hikes when the Halton Board of Education is responsible for most of the tax jump this year.

Miller says he hopes the town will hold off on the complex until the municipality can afford it.

In a prepared statement Councillor Ernie Sykes, a driving force behind the movement to build the complex, said:

"The need for a Municipal Complex has been expressed by almost 100 per cent of the members of Council. Unfortunately, now it is being used as an election ploy. The most vociferous opposition is now coming from Councillors Levy and Morrow. Both of these Councillors have at various times indicated a strong support for a cen-

tralized Municipal Complex.

Both of them clearly indicated they wanted it located in Ward 4 (their ward). Their strong opposition came after the 7th Line location was decided on and then they switched their argument to the cost of the venture. Some of the argument is "It's the wrong time". I agree, this should have been done two years ago and any further delay will only add to the costs. It would appear that Councillor Morrow has now enlisted the help of some of his playmates from the Squash Club and when I say enlisted their help, I might better say, suckered them in as it is quite obvious that they have not bothered to acquaint themselves with the needs and facts."

"I must also refer to an editorial in the Acton Free

(Continued on page 2)

Two trucks in collision

Halton Regional Police estimate \$300 in damages to a pick up truck driven by Arthur McGibbon, R.R. 5, Milton after it was in collision with a dump truck driven by George Tratch, Hamilton.

Police say the vehicles collided on Main St., on July 21 at 6:50 a.m. The dump truck received no damage.

Install plexiglass

Plexiglass will be installed all around Acton arena after all, if council accepts a recommendation made by Halton Hills administration committee.

Facility Superintendent Pat Sheehan said the recreation department had found the money. He recommended the bid of Crystaplex Plastics at \$8,236 for the whole job be accepted.

Originally the plexiglass was slated for the two sides only, but Councillor Pat

McKenzie raised objections, and the recreation department was told to see if the whole arena could be done.

He said \$1,000 could be transferred from the filter building account in Acton and \$2,436 from the account for ventilating the recreation office.

Sheehan said contractors must be hungry since the bids are coming in lower and lower. "We're not robbing Peter to pay Paul," he commented.



PASTOR AND Mrs. Thoman are leaving Acton to take on a new charge in Highway Pentecostal church, Ingersoll.

Come on in—the water's fine

Water at Fairy Lake has been tested by the regional health department and found satisfactory for swimming this week. Councillor Les Doby, contacted by a mother of an ill child, requested the tests.

Four tests were made by the department, one at the Breezes, one at Smallwood Acres and two at different places in Fairy Lake. All four tests proved the lake is safe—as well as pleasant—for swimming this summer.

1,500 ratepayers protest complex

Well over 1,500 ratepayers will have protested the municipal complex by the time all petitions are presented to council.

In an interview Tuesday afternoon, Dr. Alex Furness, of Georgetown, who started circulating petitions against the complex on July 15, said he had received 1,170 signatures on petitions and predicted about another 150 signatures are on petitions which haven't been returned yet. In addition another 325 names are on other petitions which were circulated this week in Acton.

In Acton Nurse Mrs. Lois Mackenzie brought one of the forms from Dr. Furness in Georgetown up to Acton, and the sheet filled up quickly with people petitioning against the complex. About 50 names went in to join his petition.

A petition was framed up at Ridley Cartage and circulated for two days, garnering a surprising 100 names in that short time. Of the people approached, only one would not

sign. Everybody on one street signed, for instance.

It was turned in last Friday.

Oppose region Mrs. Donna Krapek started out a petition which was copied and still going the rounds Wednesday, sheet after sheet adding to its total. Some of the sheets were left in stores; some people took them door to door.

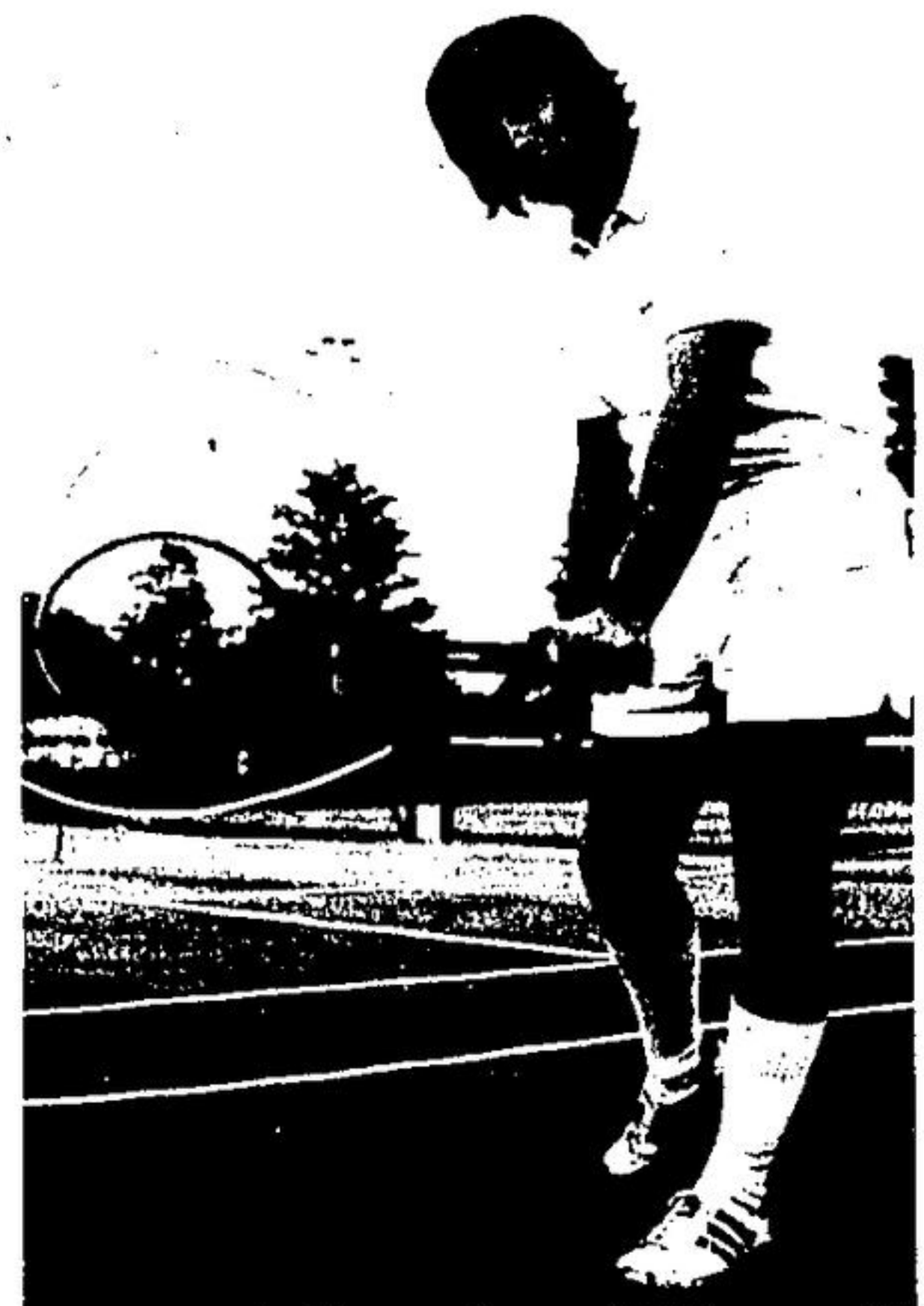
Number of signatures totalled 225 by Wednesday afternoon.

One of the merchants circulating this petition commented she felt that many of the people signing were not just opposed to the complex, but to the whole idea of regional government.

The Free Press is unaware of any other local petitions. Letters were sent in by individuals opposing the complex; a couple of these people sent copies to the paper.

Dr. Furness said it is hard to get an accurate count yet because petitions keep coming back to him that he

(Continued on page 2)



MARK CLEM shows the instructor's form during a Recreation Department tennis lesson on the Acton courts. The 27-year-old post-grad student at the University of Guelph says there are about 60 tennis students in the juvenile, intermediate and beginner's classes. Students are into the second series of six week courses.

Rams win playoff opener

Rams are taking a one-game lead into tomorrow night's second game of a best of five playoff series against Huntsville Hawks here in Ontario Lacrosse Association action.

Acton defeated Hawks 13-11 in the series' opener at Huntsville last night.

For details of the win see sports pages.

Keep 16 low age Miss Acton

The Miss Acton Fair contest will be held on the Friday evening of the fall fair again this year, in the same way as in past years.

Agers eligible here are from 16 to 23 years.

However, if a girl under 18 years of age wins the Acton crown, she will not be able to compete at the Canadian National Exhibition. There, a new ruling has declared competitors must be 18 and over. The problem of chaperoning is cited for the change.

The Acton fair board members do not wish to rule out girls between 16 and 18 who in the past have provided most of the competitors. They feel girls in high school are most likely to get together and decide to enter.

Jerry's Nook robbed

A window on the west side of the building is believed to be the means of entry for a thief or thieves who broke into Jerry's Nook and got away with \$15 in cash. Halton regional police say.

The owner, David Dills, noticed the back door of the building open on Monday afternoon. Police believe the culprits left through the door.

Proprietor Susan Lee said she could not tell if anything else was missing. The store sells crafts, wool, etc.

Police are still investigating the incident.

Representatives explain stand on complex vote

"This is the best we're going to get," two of Acton's three Halton Hills councillors told the Free Press as they explained why they voted in favor of the proposed \$900,000 municipal complex at the former Esquing township hall on the Seventh Line.

Councillors Pat McKenzie and Les Doby said that Councillor Joe Hurst, now on a trip abroad agreed with them in feeling the proposal is for the right place, at the right time.

It would be best there for Esquing people as well as Acton people.

Alternative

They suspect the alternative could be a huge new complex, including library and theatre, at Georgetown plaza, and they don't like that idea.

"Is this what Ward I wants? Personally, I don't think so!" Mr. McKenzie exclaimed. "In the best interest of Ward I ratepayers I will fight any proposal to move this

building from a central location to Ward 4" (Georgetown).

"Now that so many have signed petitions against the project both men say they of course recognize the rights of the people to object. It was for this reason the advertisement stating objections could be made was published.

"The petition doesn't upset me at all," says Mr. McKenzie. "I'm glad to see the reaction," adds the former mayor, Les Doby.

Mr. Doby adds that no doubt the matter will be shelved now, with so much objection. But he went on to point out that an O.M.B. hearing would have been the next step and people would have had a chance to object then, too.

Quotes

Mr. McKenzie repeats two interesting quotes: Councillor Morrow said "I'm not oppos-

ed to the administration building and would support it if it was to be built in one of the urban areas."

Councillor Levy is quoted as saying "Council has the wrong priorities and we should be looking at the library-theatre complex before we consider this expenditure."

Mr. McKenzie went on to say that Mayor Tom Hill, who knows the value of the town property on the 7th Line and the needs of our existing staff for some reason voted against the proposed development on the final vote.

"Does he favor a new complex in Ward Four, too? Although Ward One played an active part in Mayor Hill's election, many feel that we are being ignored."

Financing

The financing picture has changed from the figures first published, as Mr. McKenzie sees it. He thinks now that \$500,000 or

more of the total cost could be derived from the sale of 1640-owned properties; \$100,000 from lot levies from new development, and just the \$300,000 remaining to be raised by debentures.

He says Halton Hills council has been very responsible financially. If the building were accepted, increase on a \$7,500 assessment would be only \$8.85. Taxes on a home in Lakeview subdivision, for instance, would increase approximately \$6.60.

Committee

The two councillors agree that the council has worked together for three years now to ascertain needs. It was commonly understood council would determine the location and make specific recommendations as to how the new administration of the former municipalities could be best brought together to serve the town of Halton Hills in the best interest of all the people.

"Council was committed to deal with the

issue and vote on it," Mr. Doby explains.

They comment that Joe Hurst, who's away on holidays, agrees with them.

Inadequate

Public works department has already been centralized on the Seventh Line to provide larger facilities for the fire department and ambulance in Wards Three and Four.

The clerk's department is the only department with adequate facilities. Engineering is temporarily in two bays of the new garage.

The building and land of the former Esquing municipal site are already owned by the town, avoiding the expense of purchase. "The proposal is modest but adequate for about 10 to 15 years for Halton Hills." There is also room for expansion.

Delay adds

Acton's councillors think the need is proven and delay will only add to the cost.

"If public opinion says no more development after you repair the arena in Ward Three (which has the financing arranged) I can support that.

As for a return to the way things were before regional government, councillors think it's highly unlikely. Julian Reed, Liberal MPP, has said there could possibly be changes—but he surely didn't mean major ones. Unfortunately, points out Mr. Doby, Acton's case was unique, with the integration of two urban areas.

Mr. McKenzie, who is both area and regional councillor, suggests Halton Hills should have more responsibility—for water, sewers and possibly roads. He wouldn't want to see a one-tier government all in the south, so he'd like to have facilities well organized here in the north.

There would always be a sub-office in Acton whenever a complex is built, the Acton representatives feel.