

Hydro hearings adjourned—again

Another adjournment is necessary in the Bradley-Georgetown hydro expropriation hearings at Acton Legion hall because the interest of the people of Ontario is so great, a troubled hearing officer ruled yesterday.

Hearing officer Donald Meyrick, who said his decision gave him "great personal discomfort," granted the motion for adjournment because all cases under the new provincial expropriation hearing act may be affected by an appeal before the courts.

The appeal, which was granted Monday, springs from the same hearings Meyrick adjourned last November.

Expropriation hearings in Acton's Legion Hall are for Ontario Hydro's proposed 500,000 volt corridor from the nuclear generating station at Bruce, on Lake Huron, to a spot between Milton and

Georgetown.

The path of the proposed power corridor is broken into three sections for the purpose of expropriation, and the hearings Tuesday concerned the southern section, from north of Hwy 7 south to Milton station.

Opponents of the proposed power lines are appealing a split decision of the divisional court which would have prevented hearing officer Meyrick from accepting evidence or allowing cross-examination concerning other directions for the corridor, that is, other directions than the one chosen by the provincial utility.

Hearing officer Meyrick ruled last November that he ought not to hear evidence concerning alternate routes. Opponents of the line, which include the Interested Citizens Group and others, wish to present such evidence and argue against Ontario

Hydro's choice of line. The provincial utility, on the other hand, wants just to use evidence about the position of individual towers along the 14-mile section.

Resolution by the court of questions concerning the use of evidence for alternate routes would remove some of the what Meyrick called the "awareness" of the hearings.

Meyrick may reconvene the hearings before the appeal court comes down with a decision. Meyrick's adjournment yesterday carries conditions that lawyers for expropriation opponents must do all the paper work needed and with Ontario Hydro's lawyer, approach the chief justice in three weeks to see if the earliest possible date for the appeal hearing is set.

"Exceptional treatment" is needed Meyrick said. He said that work by lawyers for local residents who oppose the line "must proceed to the ex-

clusion of all other matters". Georgetown lawyer Richard Howitt, who headed the opposition, agreed to the conditions.

Ontario Hydro lawyer Tom Marshall told Meyrick that he wrote the chief justice Tuesday afternoon.

Both lawyers disagreed about the date when the hearings would most likely resume. Hydro's Marshall maintained that it'd be September or October before hearings resume, if Meyrick granted the adjournment, because of the court's crammed schedule and summer's recess.

Howitt on the other hand, felt that June would be a more likely time, a date which Marshall termed "overly optimistic" if the chief justice does not grant an early hearing.

Throughout the two hour meeting in the wide room in the Legion, Howitt contended

that in spite of the six months passing, the position of the opponents was the same as last November. They still did not know if they may introduce evidence concerning alternate lines to the hearing.

"We can obtain the objectives of the expropriating authority (Hydro) by alternate routes," Howitt said. Therefore cross-examination and the introduction of evidence dealing with alternate routes is essential to our case, he added.

Marshall outlined the choices he felt lay before Meyrick yesterday. An adjournment was one, but the lawyer said it "can't frankly be tolerated by Ontario Hydro". The hearing could proceed as it had in the middle section of the line (Limehouse-Colbeck), it could proceed and hear the balance of Hydro's evidence on specific location of towers or the hearing could continue

alternative route evidence, but added that he was not prepared also hear evidence of owners with respect to small changes in the line.

Marshall told Meyrick that he was ready to listen to appeal to bring forth Ontario Hydro witnesses for the opponents to cross-examine.

After hearing an hour's arguments by both sides, Meyrick retired to a back room with a coffee, cigar and his notes for a half hour of decision making.

Expropriation hearings on the middle section of the same line finished last month in Acton, under the same hearing officer Meyrick.

Lawyers in the north part of the controversial line are appealing Ontario Energy minister James Taylor's decision which gave a go-ahead for expropriations from the generating station to Colbeck.



JUST A GLIMPSE of bandage under his left shirt sleeve hints at the fact Henry Harbers doesn't lead a perfectly normal life. Here pictured preparing newspaper pages for Dills Printing, he spends three nights a week attached to a kidney dialysis machine. He joins in a campaign to make people conscious of the need for kidney donations. See Page 5.

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ACTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6, 1977

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Approve plant addition but query Acton's ability to pay

Halton Region's Public Works Committee approved the construction of a \$1,167,543 extension to the Acton Water Pollution Control Plant Wednesday.

But the project wasn't approved without concern being raised about Acton's ability to pay for that and other expensive sewer and water projects needed in the town.

Chairman Jack Raftis said the committee was approving a lot of work that has to be charged back to Acton, but he said it would be necessary for either Halton Hills Council or Regional Council to bale Acton out. "They can't afford all of this," Raftis said.

Regional Chairman Ric Morrow said it wouldn't be legally possible for Halton Hills to bale Acton out and only the region could do it. He

said the only method available is through uniform water rates and equalized charges on sewer work.

Acton, Georgetown and Burlington all face heavy increases in their water rates this year and in Acton's case again next year. Oakville and Milton do not have to raise their rates yet.

Oakville Councillor Carl Eriksen said Oakville had increased its rates on a regular basis to avoid getting into trouble.

"If Acton has been sitting on its hands since 1964, don't ask the people I represent to pay again," Eriksen said.

He said Acton had enjoyed cheap water rates and now they want Oakville to bale them out. "They've had bad government up there," he said.

Councillors who oppose

equalized water rates see it as a step towards equalized assessment on sewer projects as well.

The way it is now, local councils have some control over projects they want carried out. Regional Committees or Council are unlikely to reject a project an area wants if it is to be paid for by the area.

On the other hand if the charge is to be spread across the region, the region will want to have a closer scrutiny of the projects it approves.

In spite of claims by Burlington Councillors that Acton will be the big winner Acton representative Pat McKenzie is hesitant to endorse the push for equalized water rates.

"It would benefit Acton now, there is no doubt about that. But 20 years from now

I'm not sure if it will be a benefit.

"He said the expansion of

the sewage plant just approved is the last expansion for the plant.

Duby denies system 'cheap'

Councillor Les Duby, who's the former mayor of Acton, takes strong exception to remarks made at recent region meetings critical of Acton's past decisions.

Speaking of Acton's water system, region treasurer Don Farmer said last week that Acton's water and sewer system was built "on the cheap" and the situation here was "drastic."

"It was not built on the cheap, Mr. Duby asserts hotly. "It was built according to our level of assessment and our town capabilities. It's not any fault of ours if the region has got grandiose, high-cost ways of operating."

"We knew we couldn't operate in a sophisticated way.

"We had good engineering advice and our plant was quite adequate. It worked well. We knew there would be

things we'd have to do in the future.

"We did what we could afford."

He feels that equalized water rates will have to be considered, faced with the predicted 60 per cent rate increase for Acton. He thinks the equalized rates should be more satisfactory, if it's across the board. "But don't single us out as the municipality to be clobbered!" he said.

"We're not asking to be bailed out by equalized rates," he said.

"We built our own arena and library and now we're asked to share the cost of Georgetown's," he suggested.

"We didn't ask to go regional!"

He concluded "I won't accept criticism that we were lacking. We were on top of everything."



Mick Holmes

Holmes new fire chief

Halton Hills now has a fire chief for the whole town.

Monday Mick Holmes, chief of fire area number one, Acton and surrounding area was appointed to the position of chief for both districts one and two. Area two is comprised of Georgetown and the surrounding area.

Halton Hills council made the appointment following an in-camera meeting.

In addition to his duties as chief of Area One, Holmes was directed by council to take over as head of Area

Two replacing Ken Buikema who has started his new job as Safety Officer for Wimpey Homes, Mississauga, Monday. Buikema resigned February 28.

Holmes will now sit down with works committee to discuss staffing requirements. It will also be decided later where his headquarters will be.

Works chairman Mike Armstrong indicated there will likely be at least one deputy-fire chief and possibly a deputy for both fire areas.

A long time Acton resident Holmes has been in firefighting for over 30 years and before becoming chief for area one he was Acton's fire chief for 13 years.

Prior to the birth of Halton Hills in 1974 Holmes had been earmarked to serve as fire chief for the entire town but it was later decided to split Halton Hills in half and make Holmes chief for area one and Buikema chief for area two. Buikema had become fire chief in Georgetown in 1972.



ONTARIO HYDRO and cable television employees worked for several hours Monday morning to restore their respective services after a huge old tree toppled to the ground and took wires with it. The tree is on the highway south of Acton at the Norton home.

Four year frustration permit lost in shuffle

A four year, frustrating battle for a building permit for a small industrial building on Main Street North, Acton, by Mogen Toft, came no closer to a solution, Monday night at Halton Hills council.

He told council he started in 1973, when the permit was approved by the Acton planning board and council. He said apparently the papers got lost in the shuffle when regional government was set up, and were never forwarded to the OMB.

He said after many questions and endless phone calls in 1974 he was told it would be considered as part of an overall plan. "From then on nothing has happened. What is the intention, to put me off forever?" he asked.

Mayor Tom Hill explained Mr. Toft has asked Acton council for a rezoning, but the town of Acton never sent the papers into the OMB. He said later the OMB said they would not approve spot

rezoning.

Councillor Les Duby said Mr. Toft was caught up in the transfer and is suffering from the resultant confusion. He said since the OMB won't approve spot rezoning now, Mr. Toft is caught in the delay of a new Official Plan. He said some decision should be made as quickly as possible.

Councillor Pat McKenzie said the OMB wanted to know what will happen to the land behind Scene Street.

The planner said the answer would still be "No", since it is spot rezoning.

Councillor Roy Booth said the planner makes recommendations, but planning board can deal with them as they like.

Mr. Toft's problem was referred to planning board.

Approve budgets

Halton Region Public Works Committee approved sewer and water budgets for the region at special meetings Thursday and Friday.

The budget calls for \$226,725 and \$127,000 on the Acton sanitary sewer and waterworks respectively. The work planned in Georgetown for sanitary sewers amounts to \$85,000 and for waterworks \$238,105.

The budget calls for \$158,610 to be spent on sanitary sewers in Milton along with \$287,210 worth of work on the water system.

Unlike the roads budget, sanitary sewer and waterworks projects are charged back to the municipality in which the work takes place.

The high cost of the work that needs to be done on Acton sewer and water is cause for concern among regional staffers and some councillors.

Work required in Acton this year is substantially higher than work in Georgetown and only slightly less than Milton. Acton has fewer people to bear the cost and the impact on the ratepayer is more significant.

Fallen tree cuts hydro and cable

A downed tree between Acton and Speyside caused a hydro blackout in the immediate area, and a disruption of cable television service in Acton, Milton and Georgetown, on Monday.

The large, badly rotted tree, in front of the home of Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Norton on Highway 25, toppled at 9.30 a.m. taking hydro and cable wires with it as it fell to the ground.

The hydro was off until about one p.m. from the southern outskirts of Acton to

Speyside while Ontario Hydro workers strove to restore service. Speyside school was left without lights or heat and normal classes were disrupted during the morning.

Cable service was eventually restored to subscribers during the day. All of North Halton was affected, while cable workers restrung 600 yards of cable back onto the hydro poles.

According to Ontario hydro workers, the tree fell for no apparent reason, but they said it was rotted inside.

Settle

Following union meetings Monday, agreement has been reached on contract negotiations with Beardmore and Co. A vote was taken by the union membership. While agreement has been reached, no details will be available until next week, said Abbott Conway on behalf of the company. Word of the contract must yet be put in its proper form.



ARMFUL OF daffodils means money for the Cancer Society. The sale of flowers Friday and Saturday was the kick-off of the month-long campaign here. Member of Theta Phi chapter of Beta Sigma Phi Susan Robbins was selling blooms on the street in Saturday's rain.