



LIKE A FOREBODING giant, this partially-erected hydro tower looms into the sky in Erin township on 17 Sideroad between the Third and Fourth lines. The towers are being erected in Erin township while Energy Minister Reuben Baetz makes a decision on the possibility of re-routing the line before it proceeds south near Acton.

Hydro towers reach No. 24

Construction of the soaring towers of the Colbeck to Limehouse line has reached No. 24 highway in Erin Township. The towers are visible now from the highway 24, and several crews are working along the route.

The line will eventually convey 500 kV power from the Bruce generating station to southern Ontario. The Halton Hills section of the line is held up awaiting an exemption from the zoning bylaw and permit from the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

The section through Halton Hills is the smallest section in the 109-mile line. All other sections are under construction.

There are 170 towers between Colbeck near Orangeville, and Limehouse, and 80 foundations are in already. Hydro crews prefer to work

while the weather is cold, and they will soon have to halt construction when spring mud prevails along the route. Access roads have been built from the regular roads to the location of the line.

Winter work concentrates on environmentally sensitive wetlands, explains Paul Webster of the public relations department of Ontario Hydro. It's easier for the men to get in, and the land is not rutted, possibly diverting water courses.

The towers are about 170 to 180 feet high, depending on the land. They are constructed with the use of cranes.

By spring, helicopters will be needed. They will fly the rope which will straggle through the arms of the towers. Then this rope will be used to pull the wires through.

Minister promises quick decision on fate of unfinished corridor

Ontario Energy Minister Reuben Baetz placed the fate of the unfinished parts of the controversial Bruce-Georgetown Ontario Hydro corridor at the top of his priority list after a meeting in Toronto Monday.

"This is my number one priority," the energy minister told members of the Interested Citizens' Group (ICG), which opposes the line, and Ontario Hydro representatives at the Constellation Hotel.

Baetz fell short of committing himself to taking the issue to the provincial cabinet. He indicated he would consider taking the matter to cabinet after he has given some study to the views he heard Monday, and other information in his ministry.

Former energy minister James Taylor took the matter to cabinet in December with a negative result.

"I will get back to you with an answer for what we think

are the reasons for the answer," Baetz said. He strongly indicated the answer would be "very, very soon", perhaps as soon as next Monday.

The parts of the line which are fully constructed are in, the energy minister said after the meeting. "I think it gets too far down the road to stop once deals have been made with individual owners and the towers are built," Baetz said.

About 50 people—farmers,

Ontario Hydro reps, ICG experts—attended the four-hour meeting.

ICG executive member John Schneider, RR 2 Acton, adopted a wait and see attitude after the meeting. "If it's possible for him (Baetz) to be fair, what he heard will dictate a decision in favor of the people. But if cabinet acts in its usual fashion, we'll have a new minister of energy," Schneider said.

What energy minister Baetz heard were many of the

concerns of the ICG about the need for a study of an alternate to the Bruce-Georgetown corridor and the response of Ontario Hydro.

Of special interest was the first appearance in public of an Ontario Hydro systems planner to answer technical questions about how the Bruce-Georgetown corridor was chosen.

The ICG, however, found difficulties in extracting information from acting director of systems planning

Ken McClymont.

"Obviously you're not going to answer," Schneider said to McClymont after the ICG executive spent several words in a bid to pry the systems planner from position concerning the practicality of an alternate route.

Ontario Hydro's 500kV power corridor will, if completed, stretch from the Bruce nuclear generating station, on Lake Huron, across southern Ontario to (Continued on page 2)

Proclamations galore!

It was proclamation night at Halton Hills council, Monday.

April 9 to 15 was proclaimed Dental Health Week, in response to a request from Halton-Peel Dental Association.

March 29 was proclaimed Knights of Columbus day in town, and April was proclaimed Cancer Month.

In keeping with town policy, the publication of such proclamations will be paid by the organizations themselves.

Council also gave permission to have the Cancer Society flag flown during their campaign month of April, and had no objection to the sale of daffodils by the Cancer Society April 7 and 8.

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BEARPIT WAS PACKED Friday at the world premiere of Acton High School Band. The group consisted of about a dozen players who performed a number of popular tunes during lunch hours.

Acton's brief not dealt with

Requests by the Actonians for Action Committee to have Halton Region examine the internal boundaries in Halton Hills has fallen on deaf ears.

The committee expressed dissatisfaction with the current town boundaries and specifically the amalgamation of Acton with Georgetown in the town of Halton Hills.

Chairman of the Regional Bill 151 Committee, Don Gordon told council last week that his committee had turned the brief over to Halton Hills for comment. "We never heard back," Gordon explained.

Following the meeting Halton Hills Mayor Tom Hill said Halton Hills council simply filed the brief.

"Yes, we got a copy of the report, but we didn't feel it concerned us. There is no action planned to be taken on that, as far as I'm aware," Mayor Hill explained.

When the Halton Hills Council failed to comment on the brief, the regional review committee let the matter drop. The contention of the Acton group—that Acton should serve as the core of a town separate from Georgetown—wasn't debated.

Council rejects region inquiry

Yet another call for an independent study of regional government in Halton was rejected by Halton Regional Council during a regular meeting Wednesday.

Council was considering a recommendation from the council's Bill 151 Review Committee. For the second time the committee urged council to request a study. An earlier request for an independent inquiry came from the Actonians for Action Committee.

Bill 151 Committee Chairman Don Gordon said he didn't feel the study was needed. Councillor Carl Erikson agreed with that stand.

Erikson said there was a dangerous trend that suggested the only way a proper study can be carried out is with the use of experts and bureaucrats carrying fancy suit cases.

Burlington Councillor Pat McLaughlin supported that stand.

"We don't need anyone to tell us our problems. What we need is the courage to go Queen's Park and see that we get what we want," he said. Acton Councillor Pat McKenzie said he supported a review by an independent task force and noted that was the essence of a brief prepared by the Actonians for Action Committee.

Oakville Councillor Gord Reade said he opposed the call for another study and suggested approving another study would simply serve as an excuse not to act on the recommendations from the Bill 151 study.

Milton Councillor Jim Watson said he'd favor an independent study. "I feel we need a task force to carry our recommendations to reality," he said.

Education taxes up \$17 with \$86.1 million budget

The average Acton homeowner will pay \$17 more this year just for education if Halton Board of Education approves a proposed \$86.1 million budget. The overall take hike will be higher once region and Halton Hills budgets are struck.

The average tax hike is based on an average assessment in Acton of \$4,460 and the education levy will likely go up four mills.

Finance chairman Fred Armitage noted the \$86.1 million budget represents an increase of 5.4 per cent. Last year's budget was \$81.9 million but actual spending turned out to be \$81.7 million.

Three factors effected the resulting eight per cent local tax increase. Armitage noted the level of provincial support was reduced and is responsible for six per cent of the local tax hike. In addition there is increased assessment in Halton, up about five per cent, and last year the board took in two mills of taxes more than was needed. The overlevy funds have been returned to the municipalities.

Finance committee used a number of guidelines besides an eight per cent local tax increase in framing the budget Armitage explained.

He said the committee went about its task keeping in mind there would be a "responsible and realistic" adjustment in wages and the pupil-teacher ratio in both elementary and secondary schools would remain unchanged.

The board also abandons reserve funding this year and with few exceptions allowed classroom related supplies and services to go up just six per cent this year while other increases were limited to five per cent.

The proposed budget maintains levels of funding for special education, secondary school reorganization, teacher contract commitments and capital equipment replacements which had been previously approved for this year by the board.

Armitage noted fringe benefit costs have jumped 14 per cent in this year's proposed budget and while elementary school enrolment

is sliding fast, about 1,100 pupils this year costs are still going up.

He noted for a board operating within spending ceilings costs must be cut \$2 in order to reduce property taxes \$1.

The finance committee has also recommended to the board that all agreements with municipalities for community use of schools be

reviewed so "more equitable" cost sharing arrangements can be worked out.

In addition the committee wants the board to consider cutting the number of teacher professional development days, implement a tracking system for exceptional students to see if costly enrichment programs are worth having and hire

students through provincial student work programs to start forming textbook and library book readability tests for pupils.

While most of the trustee's comments were directed towards specific budget items some did make general observations.

Acton-Esqueving Trustee Bert Hinton noted government grants didn't really de-

crease. He pointed out the board will receive more money from Queen's Park than ever before. Hinton said the only change is the province's level of support didn't increase as much as it has in the past.

He asked when the finance committee was going to get down to "brass tacks" and set out real spending priorities? His question was left un-

answered since it wasn't directed at a specific budget item. Hinton was informed he can debate the merit of the budget when it comes up for final approval March 19.

Hinton said the \$86 million budget was serious business and deserved serious public scrutiny.

Beardmore objects to subdivision

The town bylaw to amend the zoning bylaw for the proposed Adams Court subdivision was referred to the works committee Monday night.

An engineer's report will be requested.

Council received only one objection, from Beardmore. Last date for filing objections was Feb. 16.

Adams Court subdivision would side on Highway 25 south, the cemetery and Ransom St. The construction

of 16 single family dwellings is proposed.

Councillor Les Duby said he thought the drainage problem in this area should be investigated. The concern about Metcalfe ravine in Georgetown makes it obvious all such developments should be looked at, he said. "I want a report from the engineer on the drainage system."

In its letter, Beardmore objected to the rezoning from open space conservation to second density residential. Reasons given are:

"1. Lack of adequate storm sewer system. Present sewage system drains on to

lands owned by us and increased flow could result in part of our plant being flooded and causing damage to our machinery and operations. The Town of Halton Hills' Engineer also shares this view. To prevent this from happening, a storm sewer would have to be constructed on Main Street at considerable cost, thereby increasing our taxes for the benefit of a subdivider. We are Halton Hills biggest taxpayer.

"2. We have operated our tannery at its present location since 1985. With so much land available in the area we do not feel that a housing development of the indicated density should be located so close to our plant.

"3. Access to Highway 25 from Ransom Street is very hazardous due to its location just below the crest of the hill. Past experience has proven that many accidents have occurred at the intersection of Kingham Road and Highway 25 where visibility in both directions is much better.

"4. From an aesthetic point of view, it is a shame to have Acton's beautiful cemetery completely boxed in with subdivisions.

"5. Market conditions indicate that we have an over-supply of houses in Acton.

"In view of the above reasons we believe and request that this space should continue to be designated as 02—Open Space.

Yours truly,
L. E. Youngblut
Secretary-Treasurer"

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JOHN VLIETSTRA MAKES a point as he talks about the Canadian automobile industry with Otto Jelinek, who is seeking the Tory nomination for Halton riding. Mr. Vlietstra and Charlie Davidson, both retired farmers, were attending a question and answer period Saturday at St. Alban's. With Mr. Jelinek is his wife, Leata.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp to visit Acton Monday

The Hon. Mitchell Sharp will be in Acton next Monday from about 12.15 until 2.30, and a public reception is being arranged.

Mr. Sharp is travelling through Halton as part of the Liberal travelling caucus, which includes three cabinet ministers and three members of parliament.

David Collette, Liberal MP for York East, will also be in Acton. He will be at the high school from 10.15 until 11 a.m.

Mr. Sharp will be the guest of honour at a reception in the United church, when sandwiches and tea will be served.

Local organizers are hoping a good crowd will take the opportunity to come and meet this distinguished parliamentarian.

Mr. Sharp has been external affairs minister, minister of Finance, and deputy prime minister. He is

presently the member for Eglinton and the chairman of the procedures and organization committee of the House of Commons in Ottawa.

After lunch and meeting with Actonians, Mr. Sharp will probably have a short time left. Organizers are planning what to show him in Acton.

Mr. Sharp will come to Acton from Oakville, and has to be in Georgetown at 2.45 that afternoon.

The travelling caucus is the 19th in a series devised "to bring government to the people."

Plans for the coming year were discussed at the regular meeting of the Business Association last Wednesday.

The meeting was held in the Station Hotel with a small attendance.

The travelling caucus is the 19th in a series devised "to bring government to the people."



SUE MELLOR TAPES UP the first dollar earned at the Mug at its grand opening Saturday evening. A packed house enjoyed the completely renovated room downstairs at the YMCA. More pictures in second section of the Free Press.