

# Procedural wrangles cloud uniform rates battle

Despite prolonged debate it is, perhaps, less clear than ever whether, starting next year, homeowners throughout the region will pay for water at an equal rate and for sewers on the basis of the amount of water they use.

As it is now, water rates vary among the municipalities. Sewer services are paid through property taxes. The region, in turn, bills local municipalities for sewer and water services.

Controversy over changing to uniform water rates and a sewage surcharge pre-occupied regional councillors nearly the entire Regional Council meeting last week. But the hours-of debate, the rhetoric, the anger, the inuendo, the procedural

wrangles and challenges to the chair ended not in a decision, but in two — two opposing decisions — that require legal opinion to resolve.

One decision approves the change in principle; the other tables the issue.

With Regional Chairman Ric Morrow breaking a tie vote, a motion approving in principle uniform water rates and a sewer surcharge amounting to 105 per cent of the water bill was passed. The motion also called for implementation of the new payment method to be withheld pending receipt of further information outlined in amendments.

Then, to everyone's surprise, the next motion calling

for tabling of the water and sewer issue and for instituting a complete study on the impact of such a change was passed as well.

Council had been debating the issue in committee of the whole. At that time, a motion to table was defeated, but Burlington Mayor Mary Munro announced her intent to ask for a recorded vote on it when the meeting went back into Council. (According to regional procedure, Council moves into a session called "committee of the whole" to discuss recommendations brought forth by its various committees. It moves back into session of Council to take the final votes on issues before it.)

Although the committee of

the whole had not finished discussing all of the items on the agenda, Oakville Councillor Mac Anderson, who had to leave to catch a flight, obtained councillors' approval to move back into session of Council for a decision on the water and sewer item. After the amended motion to approve in principle passed, Mr. Anderson left.

Mrs. Munro then persuaded Mr. Morrow to allow a recorded vote on the tabling motion. It passed by a vote of 13 to 10. (In committee of the whole, with the full Council present, Mr. Morrow broke a tie vote, defeating the motion to table.)

After the count, Halton Hills Councillor Roy Booth

said he understood he was voting on a motion to consider the tabling motion.

Said chairman Morrow, "I've tried my level best to deal with a very difficult issue with a divided council, adding he shouldn't have allowed the recorded vote on the tabling to take place when it did.

He ruled the tabling vote taken in Council was out of order. But councillors weren't buying and insisted the matter be put to the solicitor for a legal opinion.

Predictably, the debate found Oakville councillors vigorously opposed to uniform water rates and a sewer surcharge (Oakville stands to lose money in the switch); Halton Hills coun-

cillors in favor (Halton Hills would gain); Milton councillors opposed; Burlington councillors in favor, except for Ben Ciprietti and Mayor Munro, who wanted further investigation.

Burlington Councillor Walter Malkewich, whose motion calling for approval in principle was adopted with amendments, argued that although there were inequities in both systems of payment, the principle of user pay can be applied in a way which would be more equitable to a greater number of people.

He said user pay would encourage consumers to save money and practice conservation by using less water, for example, by installing

devices which cut down on the quantity of water used in toilets. He also noted the availability of a provincial grant to ease the changeover — some \$2.3-million — was not to be laughed at.

"The essence of the whole discussion is that the province has offered \$2.3 million to buy off the charge back system," said Milton Councillor Jim Watson, and Mr. Morrow agreed.

Mr. Watson reported the mayor of Sudbury told him the charge back system was the only way of maintaining equity. An amendment was added to obtain information about Sudbury's experience with its new system.

(Oakville Councillor Carl (Continued on Page 2)



ACTON COUNCILLOR Pat McKenzie appears pensive as he listens to the debate over uniform sewer and water rates.

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## Second home bid is turned down

Halton Region's Land Division Committee (LDC) last night turned down a bid by an Acton farming family for a second farm home, but the committee agreed with farmer's idea.

Acton LDC member Bill Coats said after the decision the committee was not against the idea of a second home; the application failed to comply with zoning by-laws concerning frontages.

The conveyance bid came from Clarence and Wilma Coles, R.R. 2, who hoped to transfer the land to their son Bruce. The land is on part of Lot 28 on the Fourth Line.

LDC member Nevil Chalkley, who moved denial, went so far as to want further separation bids to be handled by a plan of subdivision.

If the committee created the lots as Coles asked, one would meet the 125 foot frontage requirement; the other would be shorter. "We will not knowingly create a lot whose frontage does not comply to the zoning by-law," Coats said.

LDC member Tom Marshall, of Oakville, said that if the family wanted to have a second residence it could build on one of the other lots. The 30 acre piece has had 18

severances, Mr. Coles informed the committee.

Bruce Coles informed the committee the problem of a second residence on present lots is that he would not own the land and he would therefore not be able to get a mortgage.

Chairman Fletcher suggested the family may have better luck on other property it owns, such as the approximately 97 acres across the road.

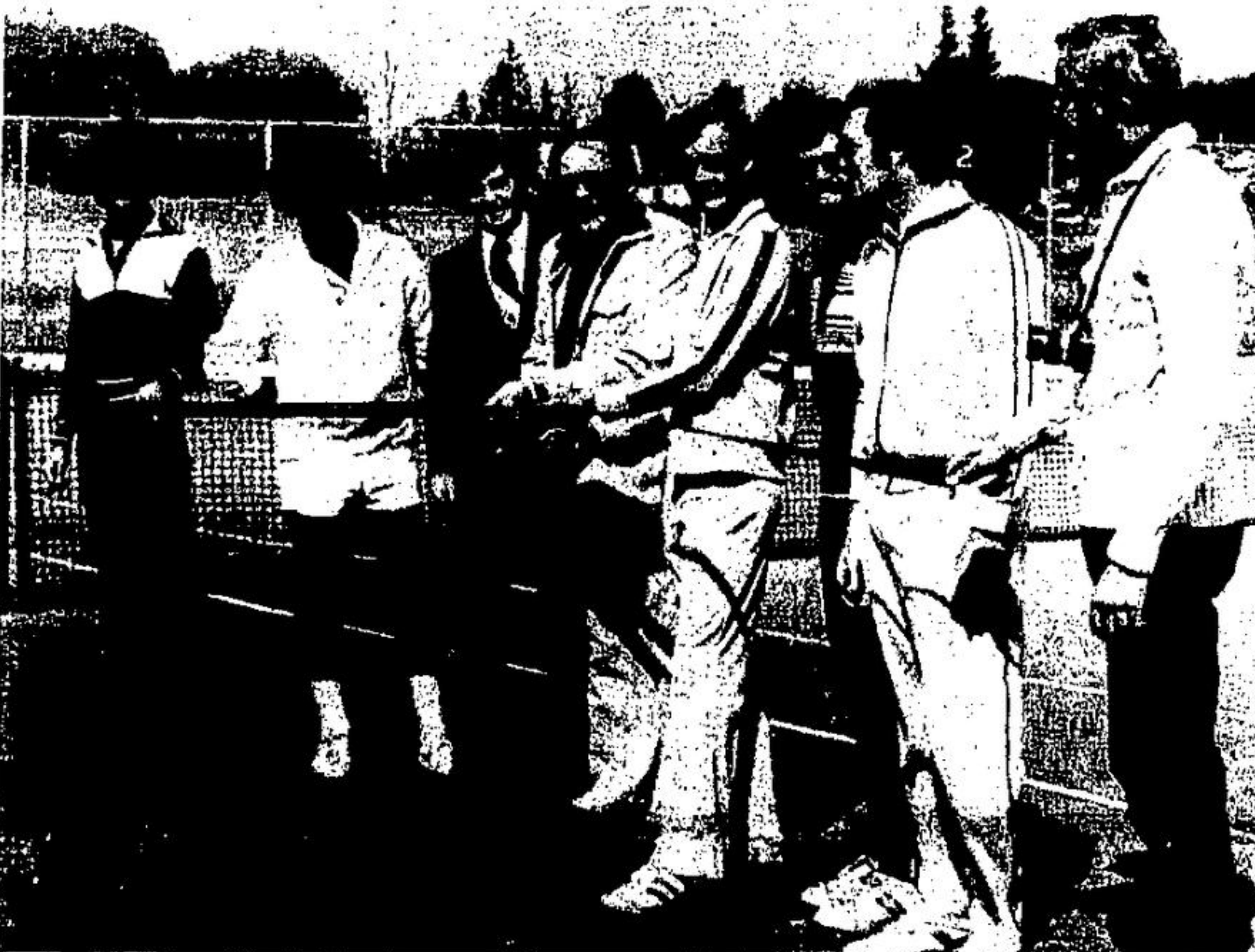
A Coles neighbor, Norm Fletcher, informed the LDC he would be happy to see the lots filled in because of the damage done by snowmobiles and dune-buggies.

### \$600 damage

Vehicles from Acton and Dundas were involved in a collision on Trafalgar Road at Steeles Avenue Thursday morning.

Halton Regional Police estimate damage to the tractor driven by Brian Merfort, R.R. 2 Acton, to be \$100.

However, damage to the auto driven by Sharon Greenbaum of Dundas amounts to about \$500, according to police.



THE OFFICIAL OPENING of the new Acton tennis courts took place on Sunday before the final of the Acton Tennis Club singles and an exhibition match between Ontario professionals John Turner and Steve Fricker. Pictured from left to right, Mike Morris, Peter Marks, Glen Campbell, Tom Hill, Mike Bullock, John Kavanagh, Jon Parrish and Vic Morris. For story see sports and recreation section.

## Will suppress iron by adding chemical

Acton is being taken to counteract the iron in Acton's water, according to region waterworks engineer Bill Kong. He says many centres counteract iron with the addition of sodium silicate to the water supply.

York, London and Markham all have iron content three or four times higher than Acton's and add sodium silicate, he explained Tuesday. "Acton is mild in comparison."

The same remedy will likely be taken here.

His department has received complaints about the iron, mainly about its taste and staining qualities. Asked if he thought the amount could cause bad side effects in people who cannot tolerate iron, he felt "it could be." However, he doubts the amount could be enough to cause cramps and diarrhoea, as some Actonians have wondered. "Some people are

more sensitive," Mr. Kong agreed.

The regional department is working in conjunction with the Ministry of the Environment on the problem of "Sequestering" the iron. The chemical will suppress it. Special equipment must be ordered and installed before the sodium silicate may be added.

A study on the long-range pumping at the new well at Fairy Lake is still underway. It is this well which is putting iron in the town's water system. The iron content is below standards allowable and is between .35 and .2 milligrams per liter, Mr. Kong explains.

## Hinton seeks second term

Veteran area politician H. Bert Hinton will try for a second term on Halton Board of Education, representing wards one and two of Halton Hills.



Hinton, a former Halton county warden and member of Acton council captured the Acton-Esqueving board seat in the 1976 election beating two other candidates including the incumbent.

He was chairman of the board of governors of Sheridan College before joining the board for the last two years where he has been a vocal critic of spending practices.

Hinton said his interest in education is based on his concern that costs be kept under control at the same time education quality is maintained or even enhanced.

He describes his first term on the board as interesting, adding he has been involved in activities at every school in Acton and Esqueving.

Hinton says he has been in touch with many ratepayers in his two wards and feels he has a good idea what their concerns are and what they expect from the school system.

### Sign hamlets keep names

The town shouldn't take down any signs identifying Georgetown and Acton or any of the hamlets until ordered to by Queen's Park Councillor Les Duby says.

Monday Mayor Tom Hill brought a request from a Glen Williams resident to have identifying signs put up at approaches to the village to Halton Hills works committee.

Engineer Robert Austin said there is no money in the town budget for signs for villages or towns.

He pointed out there is some question now of the legality of place signs for towns and villages in areas like Halton Hills where there is an amalgamated town and regional government.

Duby stated if the province ever contemplates not allowing signing of villages and towns in amalgamated municipalities the town should protest.

### Elmore Dr.

## Fences—gate to solve motorbike problems

After a discussion with George Van der Eyken and Peter Papillon, Halton Hills administration committee came up with a solution to the problem on the road allowance between lots 135 and 136, Elmore Drive, Acton.

Mr. Van der Eyken had previously told the committee the unopened road allowance is used as a hangout for motorcycles and dune buggies, with litter and dust all over. He originally asked if he could buy the land.

The solution which seemed to satisfy both men and the ten residents in the area who attended the committee meeting, will see a fence placed at the end of the road allowance on Elizabeth Drive, and at the property line of the road allowance on Elmore Drive. In addition the fence on the Elmore Drive road allowance will have a gate permitting pedestrian traffic only.

Mr. Papillon said he was speaking for some residents on Elmore Drive along Prospect Park. He emphasized they were not there to quarrel with Mr. Van der Eyken. He pointed out the access 120 feet down the road which had been suggested, if the one next to Van Der Eyken's property was closed, is an entrance to Prospect Park, and not to private property.

He said there is a bylaw prohibiting motor vehicles in parks and called for its enforcement. He claimed to have seen as many as eight motorcycles with motors running all trying to outdo each other in noise.

He said Elmore Drive goes right around the lake, and many activities such as swimming, fishing, canoeing, and picnicking go on. "These are the proper uses for a park". He asked there be signs posted saying

motorized vehicles are banned.

He suggested a fence and a gate.

Mayor Tom Hill agreed saying a gate like a turnstile might be the answer, but pointed out a woman pushing a baby carriage could not get through.

Papillon said he saw eight and nine-year-olds that night riding mini-bikes. "They could not be licensed".

Councillor Roy Booth questioned how many people would take baby carriages through the road allowance since he said the area is mostly sand and grass. He said he was thinking about a cow gate with the fence so a motorized vehicle cannot get through.

The mayor said he would get in touch with Chief Police

Ken Skerrett about the unlicensed riders.

Booth claimed the law cannot be enforced on private property.

Councillor Peter Marks warned enforcing the bylaw would not solve the problem. He said he tended to agree with the fence, but reminded the committee others with conventional bicycles, toboggans, cross country skis use the road allowance. He said the entrance should not be too small so they cannot get through.

He claimed studies show that youngsters learning to ride mini-bikes have fewer accidents when old enough to drive cars.

Councillor Pat Patterson sympathized with the residents saying he had been up there to view the spot and saw

motorcyclists "going hellbent for election".

In making the motion to erect the fences and the gate, Booth said cross country skiers could carry their skis on their shoulders through the gate. He said skidoos have access to the area when the lake is frozen. He said it might cause some hardship to people with baby carriages but felt it was the only solution to the problem.

Jack Carpenter, in the

audience, suggested there could be a potential entrance on a piece of property partly owned by Beardmore. Marks said the town could try to negotiate with Beardmore on fencing it.

Carpenter said the area is already posted "No Motor-vehicles", and commented he would be satisfied if the posting is enforced.

Councillor Peter Morris wondered if residents would now want all walkways

fenced to prevent minibikes. "Are we going to put cow gates on them all?" he asked. He said the solution was a stop-gap measure. He predicted they would now hear from the snowmobilers.

Mr. Papillon said the snowmobiles come mostly from the Legion side of the lake. He said no one seemed to object to them.

All committee members favored the fences and gate idea. It will now go to council for their approval.

## Police officer out on road

There is no longer a police officer who regularly mans the Acton office in the daytime.

Supt. Taylor says studies have shown that the constable was "most useful on the road." Cons. Rod Donaldson had been on duty in the office here.

Now Doris Townsley remains in the office during regular office hours.

Sgt. Taylor explains there are 23 officers working in four separate platoons, or shifts, from the divisional headquarters at Georgetown. On each shift, three officers usually come to Acton. Each platoon has a sergeant and he is often in Acton as well. Staff Sgt. Barrett is in charge of the Halton Hills detachment.

Mrs. Townsley can get in immediate touch with police officers by phone through the

switchboard which dispatches calls. Some calls go directly to a complaint officer in the central communications room at Oakville who dispatches the nearest cruiser immediately.

As well there is an outdoor phone at the Acton police office, which callers may use when the office is not open. "We're as close as the telephone," Supt. Taylor says.

### Weeds vanish from banks

Halton Hills town workmen cleaned up the school creek on the lake side of 25 highway Tuesday.

The town cleaned out all the weeds and garbage from the creek banks and removed the debris by truck.



STEAM TRAIN BUFFS and just ordinary families waited for CN's 6060 at the Main Street crossing Saturday. The locomotive is oil driven. The ten-car train was on its way to Stratford with

stops in town and Georgetown and no doubt other places. Saturday was the second time 6060 has been through town in a week.

DEANNE ROKOLA of Rockwood bites off the head of her gingerbread man. He was stuck in an apple, a unique table decoration at the "Ginger Snap Fair" held by St. John's Church on Saturday night.

### List of winners

Complete lists of winners in various fall fair competitions appear inside today's paper. The results are culled from the judges' books, and aren't guaranteed perfect. However, we hope readers enjoy seeing who won what, and the accompanying pictures.