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Why not change locale?

That proposed plaza in Acton's east end is not going to go away so easily as some councillors and members of planning board would like to see.

Last week developer Jerry Sprackman of Landawn Shopping Centre Ltd. spoke to council, and the majority of council members voted to take another look at his proposal, rejected by planning board twice. The board said the development was premature and would cause a harmful impact on existing merchants if built before more houses are constructed in Acton and area.

However, there are some people in Acton, perhaps a majority, who would like to see the plaza go ahead with its large Zehrs supermarket. They contend the presence of a plaza would keep rather than hinder shoppers from remaining in Acton rather than going to Guelph, Georgetown and other points.

There are points for both sides in the dispute. The argument could go on interminably without any decision if councillors don't stop passing the buck. Perhaps some of them remember the public reaction when they decided to build a new headquarters on the Seventh Line. Ratepayers were so annoyed with the expenditure and raised such an outcry council changed its collective mind after some pretty fancy waffling.

A developer's proposal and municipal expenditures are like

What others say:

What else is new?

Hon. Bette Stephenson, Ontario's minister of education, colleges and universities, and a former minister of labor, has announced 44 men and women will fan out over the province, bent on persuading small and medium sized industries to take part in apprenticeship training plans.

The whole program sounds as if some person in government has given birth to a wonderful new idea. In case government hasn't heard, apprenticeship is as old as labor itself, a system of training which was going strong 2,000 years ago, says the editor of the Wingham Advance Times.

To be more specific, apprenticeship was a flourishing part of our practical education system until government decided about 20 years ago to interfere. By raising minimum wage levels to the present figure of nearly three dollars an hour (\$2.15 for under 16 years) government made it impossible for the average employer to hire unskilled young people and provide them with training.

Community colleges were supposed to take over for on-the-job education but despite their success in some fields, the colleges have patently failed to teach the skills which are in keen demand at present. Students willing to spend three to five years necessary in some of the more highly

comparing apples and oranges but public reaction can e matters if planning board and council do not reflect the wishes of the public. Planned and controlled development don't necessarily go hand in hand.

We can understand the reluctance of council to give the go-ahead to a project which would hurt the existing business in Acton now making strides improving the downtown. By the same token, if the public is unhappy with shopping facilities they are not going to improve public relations or keep shoppers in Acton by resisting developments.

Plazas and malls are not a problem exclusive to Acton. Present business has seen the effects of malls and shopping plazas in Guelph where a vigorous downtown has been hurt by outlying malls. Pressures for these developments will continue to mount, as councillors are fully aware, and their decision won't necessarily be long term.

The answer to the dilemma council faces is to persuade the developer to take a look at providing more shopping facilities in the downtown area instead of on the periphery such as proposed by Art Gordon before planning board for the old Force Electric plant and property, now vacant at the corner of Eastern Avenue and Mill Street. It would extend the downtown and make extra shopping facilities, which residents want, available.

skilled trades are rare indeed. As a consequence the minister has now recognized what industry has known all along. We have an abundance of white-collar graduates, many of them unemployed, and a dearth of the blue-collar types who can make the wheels of production turn.

So now the government is prepared to present employers with apprenticeship plans which will, no doubt, assist employers with tax-supported grants to offset the high minimum wage requirements. The details should be interesting.

One important factor in apprenticeship training is being overlooked. In the days when young people were accepted for apprenticeship it was understood that they would be earning low wages and would be expected to take their share of general duties as the price of eventual journeyman status in their chosen trades. Today of ficialdom feels bound to keep the young learners happy with incomes which will provide the young people with cars and lots of spending money.

Sacrifices on the road to success have some merit. The graduates of that hard school are usually very proud of their skills and seldom begrudge the price of personal achievement.

-Wingham Advance Times



OUR READERS WRITE:

Philbrook report criticized

Following is a letter sent to MP Dr. Frank Philbrook and filed with the Free Press for publication:
Dr Frank A. Philbrook, MP—Halton
Dear Sir:
I must take issue with several of the statements made in your latest "Philbrook Report".
With regards to general economic policy, you state that "Our Liberal government is finally being vindicated."
While the dollar once again slips below

the 85c mark, the unemployed join legions which are quickly approaching 1 million in number, and inflation steadily climbs (currently 8.7 per cent), I find your apparent interpretation of vindication to be somewhat illogical, if not perverted.
The bold headlines contained in the Philbrook Report loudly proclaim "Spending Cuts", "Job Creation", "Tax Cuts", and "Industry Stimulated". Were these statements not so pathetic in their lack of substance, they would surely be

laughable.

I also note that you've once again taken aim at organized labor under the heading "The Labor Elections Act". Your suggested Bill to "force" labor unions to hold fair secret ballot votes with regards to elections, or contract ratification is totally beyond belief! To even suggest that a representative of management be present at such a vote is not only ridiculous, but could be termed illegal under the Canada Labour Code, Part V, Section 134 (1) (a), and (b), and 134 (1) (a).

You surely cannot believe that a management representative at a Union meeting "would guarantee that the results of labor elections truly represent the feelings of the membership without undue influence".
I can readily assure you that labor Unions need no lessons on democracy from the current government.
Perhaps I'm being unduly harsh. Perhaps in your next "Philbrook Report" you will be offering a quid pro quo for this undue interference with the fundamental democratic right to freedom of association. Perhaps you will suggest that a Union Rep be present at any corporate boardroom meetings. Perhaps you will suggest that any decisions of such meetings be ratified first by secret ballot. Perhaps you will agree to publicly scrutinize all decisions, and financial reports of these same corporations. Perhaps—but I doubt it.

I'm afraid that the constituents you represent deserve better than the subterfuge contained in your latest "Philbrook Report".
Yours truly,
Allan Foster,
Acton.

Lloyd Sankey
R.R. 4 Acton, Ontario.

Plaza won't help downtown downtown "where it's at"

Dear Sir:
I have been reading with great interest the again-off again proposed shopping centre on the eastern edge of the Town of Acton. May I suggest that the council members and the officials that are against this proposed shopping centre should be congratulated for their decision.

Look around us, the problems that have been created in our surrounding towns Milton, Georgetown and just about any other town in North America. The problem of revitalization of the downtown core. The shopping centre at the edge of town has never helped the downtown. It erodes the existing retail, and in turn the tax base of the town.

Acton has started a very well planned redevelopment of its core. This should be continued with the possibility of closing some side streets, incorporating some parking areas, and the continuation of pedestrian-

ization of areas in the core, along with an active Business Improvement Area.
Let us be realistic. No matter how much retail is added to the edge of town, Acton will remain strictly as a local retail area. People will still go to Guelph, Brampton, Mississauga, Toronto etc. for their Department Store comparative shopping.
The future retail lies in local neighborhood specialty shopping areas at one end of the scale and large regional shopping centres at the other end of the scale. The middle ground of retail is neither fish nor fowl, and only hurts the existing local merchants.

No matter how many retail market reports are prepared projecting Acton needs, remember that "Downtown is where it's at." That's the heartbeat of any town and should be protected.

Love, respect key to hope

Dear editor:
With Christmas here and gone I would like to express my good wishes to your paper for the good job it has done in the past, and to all those who agreed and disagreed with my comments. This, in my opinion, is a step in the right direction.
In an effort to improve our world as brothers in Christ, an effort we should all be interested in, let us bring this brotherly love to realization by relieving suffering caused by injustice to our fellow man throughout the world.
I have taken time to listen to many different church sermons and also the political

themes of our leadership, and conclude our greatest hope to improve the world would be to bring brotherly love and respect for our fellow man to reality, although I see little improvement. A few men still hold progress at a standstill.

The good Lord gave us the 10 Commandments to respect and obey as children of God. I have talked to all nationalities and different faiths and found none of them in darkness as regards to the commandments of God. So I have come to the conclusion that in God's name an honest and sincere effort is all that is necessary to bring love for our neighbors to realization.

This has been and still will be a challenge to every living soul until love and desire for it by all men is sincere, and an honest effort is made to relieve suffering with action as well as words.

So let's all get to work and through our love and action make this world at least livable for all of God's creatures, for our own salvation.
Yours sincerely,
George Graham
R.R. 1, Limehouse.

Agrees with evangelist

Dear Sir:
I would just like to let you know I really enjoyed the article in Dec. 20's paper about the evangelist who exposed Darwin's and Freud's doctrines for what they really are; destructive! I appreciate your decision to have it printed.

I agree with all my heart with what was said and find it very fitting with the spirit of Christmas because truly, if it wasn't for the first Christmas, we would have no reason for living whatsoever! But praise God, The Lord has come.

Let earth RECEIVE her KING! Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Blinnie
173 Perth St.,



Winter reflections.