



All around the world thousands of boys and girls are celebrating Scout and Guide Week with many special events. For more than 70 years, millions have passed through Scouts and Guides and their younger counterparts, to become healthy, learned individuals. Acton, as small as the town is when compared to

the rest of the world, has put out its share of fine men and women. Included are, left to right, Brownie Adrienne Kovacs, Guide Sandra Bendicks, Beaver Andrew McVeigh, Venturer Eddie Blaser, Scout Andrew Ferguson, and Cub Kenneth Phillips. Photo by JENNIFER ROWE

# Most at meeting want new plaza

A forest of exposed palms indicated favor with the proposed Zehr's store and plaza on the east end of town at last week's public meeting of Halton Hills Planning Board.

Most of the approximately 300 people voted with raised arms in favor of the plaza proposal. About 30 people opposed the plaza for one reason or another.

The public meeting at the high school Wednesday was to be a sounding board of opinion by planning board. The board is to hear at least one more presentation next week, and a decision is expected by town planner Mario Venditti towards the end of March.

There were about twice as many people who said they favored the plaza than those who spoke against the proposal during the two hour meeting.

Some people came to the meeting with their minds made up. A provincial ministry of housing official, Mirko Lakoseljac, said he was asked which side he was on—before the meeting in the cafeteria started. There were men and women standing at the back of the room and near the door throughout the meeting.

Some people who identified themselves as being in favor of the project, at the corner of Highway 7 and Churchill Road South, also levelled charges against downtown merchants.

"This town has deteriorated because of the parking," Ralph Denny an R.R. 2, Acton resident said. "It's not worth coming to town to shop, boys, cause I'm not walking halfway home with the groceries." Mr. Denny lives on Highway Seven near the Fourth Line.

Lack of parking places for downtown shoppers was the target of many barbs while the stores' facilities also took a licking. "We're fed up with the little dinky things downtown," complained Mrs. Fritz Dehaan of R.R. 2.

Walter Gosbury drew on his knowledge of Zehrs' store at Elmira. He said the business situation improved there, in spite of the fact, or because of the food store. He went on to say Zehrs would improve business here, too. Mr. Fosbury also said Acton's business area is not as good as in the early 1940s.

Developer Jerry Sprackman of Landawn Shopping Centres told the gathering he is proposing a Zehrs plus eight retail stores with room for expansion. "We also believe in proper planning," Mr. Sprackman said.

Mr. Sprackman said consultants have indicated a Zehrs store can do well in Acton without adversely affecting the downtown. He invited people to check on the effect of his previous projects at Alliston and Bolton. Mr. Sprackman has a conditional offer on the eight and a half acre site.

Many of the people at the meeting were handed a two-page document titled Acton Shopping Centre. One part of the paper from the developer, states studies indicate a strong market for development and "a nominal economic impact on existing facilities."

The Zehrs plaza may close one of the existing supermarkets, admitted Mr. Sprackman.

In the public part of the meeting Anna Coniglio echoed one of the charges made by Mr. Sprackman against the Business Improvement Area (BIA). She said the BIA, which receives a special tax, is using that money to fight the plaza, rather than improve the downtown.

BIA chairman Henry Stachyra drew cries of "where" from the crowd when he said "We've outlets from Crewsons Corners to Churchill Road."

Giving background to the meeting he said council ruled against giving time for the BIA to make a market study. The BIA, he said, welcomes competition. However, he encouraged such developments as Zehrs downtown where there are existing services.

The BIA then presented a film which described in detail the purpose of the provincial program.

However, when the BIA soon after wanted to show some colored slides, the meeting chairman informed Paul Nielsen, that his time was up.

Mr. Nielsen, speaking for the BIA, managed to indicate the effect on the business community of the proposed plaza. "There are people who say while we can still show a reasonably good balance sheet, let's get out." He, like later merchants, indicated there is land for sale downtown.

"You've been speaking for about 35 minutes. It's now time for people to speak," Councillor Armstrong said. The ruling was greeted with applause. Mr. Armstrong also directed an architect, Elizabeth Davidson from Toronto, to make her submission to the planning board clerk rather than take time in the public meeting.

One woman indicated she favored the plaza, in part, because of the jobs it would create for young people.

"It's we people in Acton that are concerned. We're paying out taxes, so give us something for it," Ruth Findley said.

While some merchants at the meeting spoke against the plaza proposal there were some others residents who sided with them.

Long-time resident Vic Bristow said he believed the downtown business men are doing a good job. He countered much of the criticism concerning prices in town and distances people claimed they had to walk from the shops to their cars.

"Mr. Sprackman made a good, smooth and convincing presentation—to impressionable minds," Mr. Bristow said. He continued by saying the plaza may use the balance of the sewage treatment capacity left in the plant. "The people of Acton will pay for sewage expansion, not Sprackman."

Deborah Sankey, R.R. 4, opposed the plaza. She also recognized the parking problem in town, but went on to say she has never been without a parking space within a block of her destination or behind the IGA store. She observed the results of the plaza at Milton—rather than strengthening the business core, it caused a shift. Within a period she thought residents should give the local merchants a chance.

Mike Franklin, Duby Road, said there is a tremendous amount of popular support at the meeting which he said was probably more a condemnation of the downtown rather than support for the plaza.

## Nurses want 40%

An almost 40 per cent hike in wages and benefits is being sought by Halton's public health and registered nurses.

Although a news blackout has been imposed on negotiations for the 1979-1980 contract, a copy of a confidential report by personnel director Dennis Camm was leaked to the press.

Halton Region currently employs 15 registered nurses earning between \$13,020 and \$14,920 and 34 public health nurses earning between \$14,230 and \$16,130, according to reports.

The salary and benefit package totals a 39.5 per cent increase. Negotiations are also underway on some non-monetary issues which were not revealed in the report.

The salary increases will add a reported \$299,000 to the regional budget.

The nurses are also seeking changes in the dental plan, five weeks holidays after eight years instead of after 22 years, and a revised formula for mileage which could end up giving nurses who use their cars on the job about 40 cents a mile.

## Parking critics won't use plaza B.I.A. says

Critics of Acton's lack of parking spaces did not seem to bother Business Improvement Area (BIA) chairman Henry Stachyra during last Wednesday's public meeting at the high school. He even went as far as to later make a prediction about them.

"The only thing that bugs me is the people who said they wanted a plaza won't end up using it," Mr. Stachyra said Tuesday. Why? Because the 20,000 square feet of space offered by developer Jerry Sprackman is not large and an

open air plaza is obsolete by to-day's standards said the BIA chairman. What is being offered is not much of an improvement. People, indicated Mr. Stachyra, prefer enclosed malls because going to them amounts to an outing. (Continued on Page 3)

## Town hall question goes before council

Representatives of the Acton Town Hall Restoration Committee will appear before Halton Hills general committee next Monday in a bid for funds to go towards restoring the old town hall.

Vice-chairman of the committee, Doug Fread told the Acton Free Press over \$3000 had been raised in pledges in the past few months, with some coming from former Acton residents now living in Toronto. In addition, he said, the Acton Rotary Club, the

IODE and the Chamber of Commerce have written to council expressing their support in the project.

Pledges can still be made at Sweetman Shoes, or with committee members George Elliott, Yvonne Rosenquist and Lou Charlebois.

If the committee can raise \$50,000, Mr. Fread said, and the town is willing to give a substantial donation, grants will be available from the Ontario Heritage Foundation and Wintario, Patrick Coles, a London,

Ontario, architect puts the total costs of restoration, both interior and exterior, at \$236,000.

The Chamber of Commerce, at their last meeting, voted and agreed that, "in the event of restoration of the town hall, the Chamber of Commerce will take responsibility of maintenance and lease of its operations," according to president Jake Kulken.

In the meantime, the town hall, once a meeting place for happy occasions, sits empty after being declared "unsafe"



Five members of the Legion Ladies Auxillary could put Colonel Sanders out of business. Left to right, Doris Fitzner, Sylvia Foley, Ruth Courtney, Grace Townsley and Anne Fitzner worked hard behind the scenes to cook fried chicken at the Legion family picnic. See Page 8.

## Noise buffering for Highway 25 - Wallace

The 11.5 acre parcel of land on Highway 25 between the railroad tracks and Wallace Street Acton, must have noise and slight buffering from the industrial area, according to the Ministry of Housing.

The land, being developed as housing by North Halton Real Estate, has no requirement for buffering at present. The application for rezoning from industrial to residential is before the Ministry of Housing at present.

Councillor Roy Booth contended it was up to the residential developers to do the buffering, rather

than any future industry. "If we say do this and do that industry will say they will go somewhere else."

Clerk Administrator Ken Richardson said the town already has control in part under Section 35A of the planning Act.

Councillor Marilyn Serjeantson agreed the developer should do the buffering since it is his land that is being rezoned.

Councillor Ed Wood said the project had been on the way for five years and he didn't want to see it held up any longer. He said if any more items are asked of the

developer he doubted if he could carry on.

Councillor George Maltby asked who owned the abutting land and was told it was Diston. "So the land is not up for sale at this time," he commented.

The town agreed to add a statement requiring buffering between the residences and the abutting land, and said new industrial development within 400 feet of the lands would be subject to a development agreement.

Councillors Les Duby, Roy Booth and Walter Biehn opposed the motion.

## Fox shot

A rabid fox was shot and killed by Anthony Williamson on his farm near Acton High School, Thursday.

An Animal Control Unit member, from Limehouse, cautioned the high school about the incident. The unit removed the fox. Two dogs and a cow had to be destroyed last November after contracting rabies. Foxes, a pup and an adult, were spotted in the area north of the curling club. One animal was seen by a police sergeant.

Sunday what is thought to be a rabid fox escaped north after it failed to get inside a dog pen at an R.R. 2 Norval home.

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## Duby back

Councillor Les Duby made his first appearance at council, Monday night after a lengthy illness.

He was welcomed back by Mayor Pete Pomeroy and had a warm handshake from every councillor in the room.

He said he was still taking it easy, but felt "pretty good".

## Council urges 3 year term

Elected officials should have a three year term of office, instead of the present two, in areas where regional government has been established, Halton Hills council decided, Monday night.

Only Councillors Walter Biehn and Ross Knechtel opposed the motion backing a resolution from the Region of Peel.

The Peel resolution asked the Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs to introduce legislation implementing the three year term.

It pointed out municipal government is increasingly complex with long term implications for residents, and suggested the higher cost of electioneering every two years could limit local politics to the wealthy.

Councillor Roy Booth argued a two year term does not give new councillors time to become really acquainted with town matters, before it's time to face an election. No other comment was made as the motion was approved.

# Aim for maximum 5% tax hike

A determined effort to keep any tax increase for town purposes this year to a maximum of five per cent is being made by Halton Hills council.

Monday night, at the insistence of Councillor Walter Biehn, a \$122,000 storm sewer project on Stevens Crescent was cut out of the draft capital budget. The town's share of this cost would be \$61,000 with the other half a provincial subsidy.

The budget committee, headed by Councillor Harry Levy followed town policy using the pay as-you-go basis, incurring no debt.

To reach the goal of taking \$725,000 from the operating budget to cover capital items, the budget must be pared by \$75,000, Levy explained. The cutting of Stevens Crescent storm sewers, an amount of \$61,000 has helped cut further cuts will be made.

Cuts already made reducing the draft budget from \$989,409, include the deletion of work on Charles, Churchill, and Bard Lane at a town cost of \$73,000, the paper mill dam ice

and flood control at \$28,000, central works yard at \$40,000, two riding lawn mowers at \$8,000 and two trucks at \$29,000.

Levy pointed out the education and regional taxes will be on top of the town taxes. He said many items had to go and more will have to go in order to be realistic.

Before his successful bid for the cut, Councillor Walter Biehn questioned the addition of Stevens Crescent storm sewers, when cuts were being made in other places. He said he knew of no complaints from the area.

Councillor Roy Booth asked why Charles, Churchill Crescent and Bard Lane at a town cost of \$73,000 was cut, then Stevens Crescent at a town cost of \$61,000 was added.

Levy replied over the past two years no road work had been done in Ward Four. Booth said he understood all the engineering work has been done on the Churchill-Charles-Bard area, but no engineering has been done on Stevens Crescent.

Engineer Bob Austin, when questioned, said the Churchill-Bard area was the last year

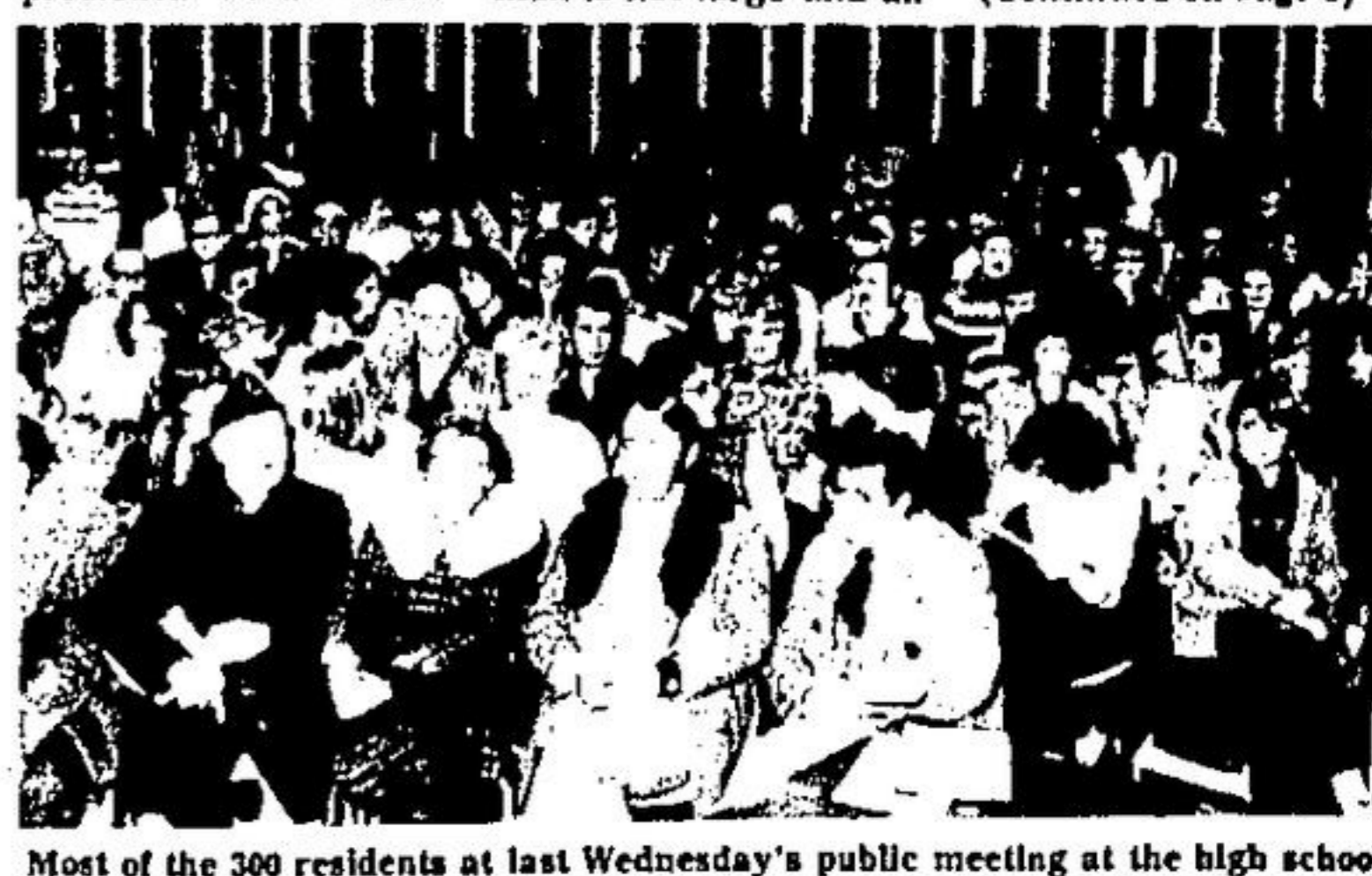
of a four year program in the area. He said Stevens Crescent may be more functional. He said if Stevens Crescent is done this year the engineering would have to be done by a consultant. He said engineering in the Bard Lane-Churchill-Charles area is completed.

Biehn pointed out Stevens Crescent was never in the budget and should be cut. "This business of ward politics I find disagreeable." He moved Stevens Crescent be dropped.

Councillor Russ Miller agreed, and suggested the contention no road work in Ward Four was a parochial attitude. He reminded council the Metcalfe ravine would cost almost a million dollars over three years, and would be paid by everyone in the town. "Sooner or later the taxes have to level off; people in the rural areas have had their taxes doubled since regional government."

Levy argued the cuts should be made where no provincial subsidy money would be lost.

Booth countered that the subsidy on Charles-Churchill and Bard Lane which was



Most of the 300 residents at last Wednesday's public meeting at the high school voted in favor of a new shopping plaza.