



**This week thru the lens**



**Optimist soap box derby**



**Knechtel, Grubbe suggest**

**Councillors against Section 86 should find alternate system**

Halton Hills councillors who voted against property tax assessment reform through Section 86 have a responsibility to come up with alternative solutions to unfair assessment problems throughout the town according to Acton Councillors Ross Knechtel and Terry Grubbe.

Monday general committee received a report from treasurer Roy King urging town staff not appeal high and low assessments.

Appealing high and low assessments was an idea suggested by Grubbe a few weeks ago during a visit to council by a group of Acton and Esqueping residents who support Section 86 and feel their assessments are too high under the present system. The taxpayers urged councillors reconsider their decision to reject Section 86, but council didn't accept.

Committee also received a report Monday which explained the complicated equalization factors used throughout the town for assessments and taxes.

Knechtel said it is obvious the province is willing to come up with equalization factors but is either "too lazy or just doesn't give a damn about how the factor spreads the tax burden" over the four areas of Acton, Georgetown, Esqueping and part of Oakville which were merged by Queen's Park to form Halton Hills.

The province is just laughing at Halton Hills and saying they won't change equalization factors even though they aren't right, he said.

Halton Hills, but council must still take some responsibility because the town has failed to ask Queen's Park for any changes. He said councillors simply don't have any answers for inequities and the day is coming taxpayers will demand answers.

Councillors who voted against Section 86 should be finding alternative answers. "We are saying a lot of things are wrong

with the present system but don't bother us about it.

Grubbe said she agreed after reading King's report the treasury staff shouldn't be appealing assessments. She challenged those councillors who rejected Section 86 to consider setting up a committee to appeal assessments rather than have staff do the huge job. Section 86 was the best answer to

assessment problems, Grubbe maintained.

Councillor Pam Sheldon, who was away when Section 86 was rejected, but voted against it, said Grubbe and Knechtel were wrong to suggest some councillors were irresponsible. She said councillors aren't assessors and assessment is a serious issue not easily settled. She said finding a solution for assessment

problems isn't now "on the shoulders" of those who voted against Section 86.

Knechtel said councillors shouldn't be waiting for some other solution to assessment inequities to come along.

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**Parkette soon on Elizabeth Dr. need donors for windbreak, patio**

There will soon be a lovely little parkette on Elizabeth Dr. not far from the seniors' apartment building thanks to the efforts of the Acton Lions Club, Acton Beautification Committee, (ABC), several local businesses, the Acton Legion Ladies' Auxiliary and some Acton High School teachers and students.

The ABC started the project a few months ago by planning to put in some park benches so seniors could sit and view Fairy Lake.

However, now there will be not just five benches but some trees and shrubs and there are hopes for a windbreak and a patio.

The Legion ladies donated three benches and Denny's Insurance

and Halton Community Credit Union one each. Concrete and wood for the five benches cost over \$50 apiece. Toronto Wood Treating in the industrial park gave the ABC a real bargain price for the wood. Julie Conroy, one of the two ladies taking care of the project, said this week. Debra Sankey is also working on this project.

Students in Murray Swanson's woodworking classes at AHS sanded the wood down as well as notching it for the pins which hold the seat and back in place. Teacher Susie Beeber is engraving the names of the donors on the benches. The wood is being taken back to Toronto Wood Treating to be dipped in a green stain so they won't have to be

pointed in the future. The Acton Lions Club is making a substantial donation for landscaping and two firms were invited to quote on the project. Neil Miller and Don Murdy are working on the Lions part of the venture.

There will be a three bench grouping with maple trees for shade and flowering bushes to add beauty.

The other grouping will have two benches, maple trees and flowering bushes and hopefully a patio if a group, firm or individual offers to donate interlocking sidewalk stones, concrete slabs or patio stones. Mrs. Conroy explained.

Mrs. Conroy says they'd also like to put in a pine tree windbreak so the seniors could use the parkette in cooler

weather, but the cost will be around \$700 so a donor for this portion of the parkette project is needed.

She expects the parkette will be in place within a few weeks and notes its location near the

end of the footpath from the parkland on Elizabeth Drive to the footbridge behind the rink and Prospect Park means it will be within easy walking distance of the seniors' apartments complex.



Constable Raj Swaminathan, safety officer with the Halton Regional Police, conducted a bike safety clinic at the Acton Library Saturday night.

**Municipal building...**

(Continued from page 1)

Acton and Esqueping. In addition Whiting said a 40,000 square foot building might be adequate for Georgetown but not for the larger municipality of Halton Hills.

Li countered because of restrictions of the Niagara Escarpment Commission most development in Halton Hills will come south of Georgetown so in future years a municipal building on Highway 7 in Georgetown would be central to the majority of citizens. He said he was only asked by Heslop to look at the Georgetown site and he wasn't comparing sites.

Georgetown Councillor Roy Booth agreed most development will be south of Georgetown so the most central location in the future would be Georgetown. He reminded councillors they have been told repeatedly by Acton citizens they want their town to remain a "nice little community" so there won't be much growth there.

Pomeroy observed Heslop's firm was bringing the proposal in response to the newspaper articles reporting the town

was setting funds aside for a building. He observed the proposal wasn't on a central site because Heslop already owns the Georgetown site.

Several councillors called the Heslop proposal "innovative". Pomeroy asked if a lease purchase agreement would be considered and Rod Whiting replied they were hoping a committee of council and staff could be established to discuss various items with the company, including rental-purchase.

Pointing to the way costs have escalated and the smallness of the town building fund, Pomeroy suggested the Heslop proposal might turn out to be the only way Halton Hills can achieve the goal of a central municipal complex.

Li's figures showed over a ten year period leasing would be about \$800,000 and the developer's costs for the complex the municipal building would cost \$76 a square foot to build. He said Halton Hills doesn't need

posh quarters and he disagreed with such costs. Councillor Ross Knechtel worried about the town having to pay

regional taxes if it leased a building while Halton Hills wouldn't pay regional taxes if it owned its own building.

This committee would be required to report back by 1982 to either the budget committee or council.

About five years ago council contemplated building a \$900,000 addition to the main municipal building on Trafalgar Road just outside Georgetown but public opposition shot the plan down.

However, council did start setting money aside for an eventual central administration building and now about \$800,000 has accumulated.

The municipal building lay dormant until a few weeks ago when the possibility of debenturing \$1 million to add to the \$800,000 for a municipal building was included in the five year capital forecast in 1982.

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