

Lorne Doberthien's crusade pays off

Province announces licence plates for disabled



Lorne Doberthien

Handicapped people across Ontario will have an easier time in the future parking and they have an Acton man to thank for the improvements.

Lorne Doberthien has seen his lobbying efforts with the provincial and federal governments and regional and local council produce a number of results for fellow handicapped people, including disabled licence plates and regulations to enforce that handicapped parking spots are used only by the handicapped.

Recently Minister of Transport James Snow announced a number of measures, including a new licence plate for the handicapped and a model by-law for municipalities to follow in enacting parking bylaws to help the disabled.

Following is the text of Snow's announcement to the Legislature:

I am pleased to be able to provide the House today with the final details of my ministry's initiatives to assist handicapped drivers throughout the province and, as a side benefit, make the public more aware of the special needs of these drivers and those who transport them.

"As of February 1, 1983, all Ministry of

Transportation and Communications vehicle licensing offices will have available our new disabled symbol licence plates, and our privatized outlets will have applications for the plates which can be mailed to the MTC for processing.

"The plates will be issued without extra charge to any handicapped person whose mobility is seriously restricted for medical reasons or who requires the use of a wheelchair, crutches, etc., and will replace their current passenger plates. They also will be available to anyone who regularly transports a disabled person.

"The purpose of the new plate is to provide an easy means of identifying vehicles eligible for the reserved parking spots which are being offered more and more these days.

"While my ministry and organizations representing the handicapped have tried to educate the public on the importance of respecting these parking areas, a degree of abuse still continues. I am certain most of the honorable members here today have seen a reserved parking spot taken by a driver who clearly had no physical need for such front-row privileges.

"These plates are a direct response to requests by the handicapped and their organizations to help eliminate this abuse and to accommodate our disabled citizens. They will carry the internationally recognized symbol for the disabled in place of the first two letters of the usual plate.

"Any person requesting a disabled-symbol licence plate from my ministry will be required to sign a statement attesting to his or her handicap or the driving service he or she provides to the handicapped on a regular basis.

"At the present time, some of our municipalities already issue special handicapped placards or permits. However, changes are needed in Ontario's Municipal Act so that communities also can recognize the provincially issued plates as giving their owner the legal right to whatever standing, stopping or parking privileges an individual municipality chooses to extend.

"I expect these changes will be introduced some time early in the spring session by my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Claude Bennett).

"Our aim now is to have all municipalities in-

involved in special initiatives to help our handicapped drivers. That is why last year, during the International Year of Disabled Persons, the need to help these communities devise the necessary bylaw was made a priority project. Now MTC staff have finalized a model parking bylaw to assist municipalities that will be adopting legislation in the future to extend special privileges to the handicapped and/or their drivers.

"It is my hope that the municipalities will adopt the major elements of the model bylaw such as eligibility, enforcement and scope; for example, on or off-street parking, use of no-stopping zones, etc. In this way, we will be extending our disabled drivers the best helping hand possible by creating at least some level of consistency in our laws.

"It is, of course, also my hope that municipalities currently without these special bylaws will move as quickly as possible to enact this needed legislation. I will be sending a letter to every mayor and reeve in Ontario within the next two days with a sample copy of the proposed bylaw which we would like the municipalities to consider

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Town says deposit on land by lame duck council legal, citizens can challenge in court or petition for probe

by Gord Murray

Halton Hills has a legal opinion from the Town Solicitors that it was legal for the outgoing council on November 22 to put down a \$10,000 deposit as an option to purchase land for a possible future municipal complex.

The only way to verify that council acted legally, since legal opinions can vary, would be for citizens to launch a court action against the Town or for citizens to petition the province for an inquiry.

Since the news broke that the outgoing council had made this decision at the first meeting after the November 8 election, and the last meeting of the 1980-82 council, numerous readers have asked staff of this newspaper if the action was legal.

This newspaper contacted the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and were referred to Section 108 of the Municipal Act, which deals with "certain acts not to be done by councils after polling day."

Section 108 says: "(1) The council of a local municipality shall not, after the day the poll is held for the election of the council, or, where all members of council are elected by acclamation, after the day the candidates are declared elected under section 40 of the Municipal Elections Act, pass any by-law, except a by-law with respect to an undertaking, work, project, scheme, act, matter or thing that has been approved by the Municipal Board, or resolution for, or that involves, directly or indirectly, the payment of money other than that provided in the estimates for the current year, or enter into any contract or obligation on the part of the corporation, or appoint to or dismiss from office any officer under the control of the council, or do any other corporate act, except in case of extreme urgency, or unless the act is one that the council is required by law to do or is one that the council is authorized to do by a resolution or by-law passed before the day the poll is held or the day the members of council are declared elected under section 40 of the Municipal Elections Act, as the case may be."

"(2) Subsection (1) does not apply if the new council that will take office after the poll or acclamation will be composed of not less than three-quarters of the members of the council as

composed at the time of the poll or acclamation"

Clearly Halton Hills council was controlled by subsection 1 of Section 108 since there will be four new faces on the council to be sworn in December 8. Only 69 per cent of the outgoing council is returning to office for the new term.

Clerk-administrator Ken Richardson said Monday in taking \$10,000 from the special reserve fund built up since 1977 from lot levies, council was using monies "provided in the estimates for the current year." He said a legal opinion on the implications of Section 108 with regard to the land purchase deposit had been obtained from the town solicitors before the matter was brought before council and the solicitors said it was within council's prerogative to spend the money from the reserve fund because a reserve fund forms part of the estimates or budget for the current year, in their opinion. Richardson added the reserve fund was set up for a future municipal complex and that's what the money was being spent on.

He said the reserve fund wasn't approved by the Ontario Municipal Board, another exemption for council action when less than three-quarters of the members are returning, because OMB approval wasn't necessary.

Without studying the case, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Legal Branch solicitor Linda da Rocha said she couldn't offer an opinion if a reserve fund is legally part of the Town's "estimates for the current year." This isn't a matter the Ministry's legal branch would look into, they draft the Act and advise the minister on legal matters, they don't enforce the Act, check to see if municipalities are following it, or prosecute municipalities.

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Possible complex site likely to cost \$650,000

If the new Halton Hills council decides to close the deal for the nearly 30 acre Stevens' Estate on Maple Ave. in Georgetown for a future municipal complex the price will likely be \$650,000.

The price tag for the land started at \$750,000, but after a land survey revealed eight acres of property couldn't be developed because of conservation authority restrictions the price dropped to \$650,000, according to the agreement councillors were given during last week's meeting.

Bob Nicholls and his firm, Longmore Developments Ltd., reached an agreement of "purchase and sale" on June 18 with the Estate of Paul L. Stevens for the purchase of the land. The price was to be \$750,000 with a \$10,000 deposit.

"By understanding previously reached between Longmore and the Town" the property wouldn't

be purchased unless the land was transferred to the Town with Longmore having "no further rights or obligations under the agreement of purchase and sale." In other words, Longmore put down the deposit of \$10,000 and the option to purchase was transferred later to Halton Hills, with council repaying Longmore its deposit. Paying Longmore the \$10,000 didn't hinge on the land purchase closing.

In addition the Town is paying Longmore \$678 in interest on the \$10,000 deposit "made by Longmore for the purchase of the property on June 9, such sum being outstanding at least up to and including September 9, 1982." Clerk-administrator Ken Richardson said September 9 refers to

(Continued on page 2) Mayor denies hold up..... See Page 2



The principal, teachers and students at Robert Little public school wish parade viewers Merry Christmas in many different languages from their float in Saturday's Santa Claus parade. The sun came out for the parade which was hailed as one of the largest in its history. More pictures on Page 3.

Santa's parade big, but quiet

Santa's arrival in Acton was hailed as one of the largest parades in years, though it was also one of the quietest.

Hundreds lined Mill St. from the tracks to the Main-Mill intersection to watch the fire trucks, numerous floats, three marching bands, majorettes and of course Santa Claus come through town.

It was a cold day for the parade, but fortunately dry.

Floats were jammed with children who enjoyed the thrill of being in the parade. Themes included

the Night Before Christmas, Christmas around the world, old time Christmas and other holiday season fantasy topics.

Honey Pot Nursery's float was judged the best overall, while Robert Little earned the nod for the best school float. In the service club's category the Optimists were picked tops, and the Hide House was judged to have the best commercial float. The Acton Agricultural Society had the winning entry in the "other" category.

Other floats and vehicles in the parade included fire trucks from several eras, Co-Op Nursery,

Lions Club, the YMCA, Block Parents, Stedmans and Achilles Motors, Wendy's, Halton Regional Police, Acton Minor Hockey Association and Taitman's Garden Centre.

The Georgetown Air Cadets' band and Georgetown Legion Pipe band joined the Acton Citizens' Band in providing music, but they were so spaced out and with no recorded music from the floats, it was a pretty quiet parade. In addition the Halton Hills Elkettes marched in the parade.

inside

An Alberta man was killed in an accident between Acton and Rockwood. Details on page 2.

There was a big fire Monday in Ballinacra. See story on page 2 and photo on page C1.

More MPs will be too costly otto Jelinek and Peter Pomeroy say. More on page 6.

Four people were caught stealing furs and leather garments from the Hide House Sunday. Details on this and other crimes in police beat on page 6.

The Hide House was the setting for the filming of a TV show last week featuring many Actonians. See photos on page 7.

The town hall hearing is next Wednesday. Story on page 9.

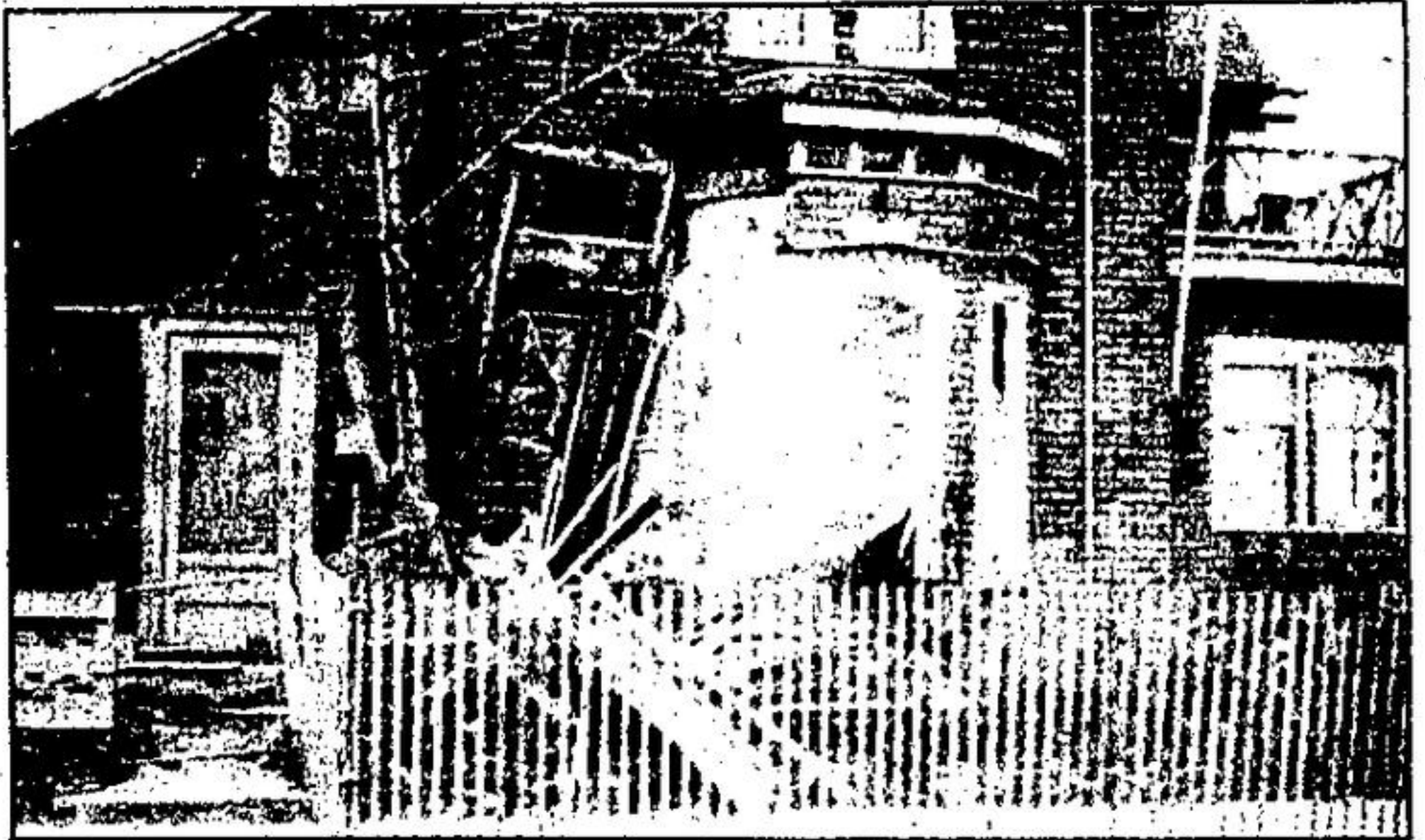
Two youths were convicted for a summer burglary at the Hide House.

Former Sabres coach and Acton resident Jules Ruszani is coaching the Gems of Georgetown. See story on page B1.

On page B1 readers will find more letters about minor hockey.



Last night I got personally smoothed... the battery was not included.



A stolen truck was driven into this house last week.

Stolen truck driven into house

At about 2 a.m. Thursday morning, a 1976 Chev Blazer was driven into a bay window of a house at 37 Main St. North after the driver lost control.

According to police reports, the jeep was stolen from L&L Ford, across the road, prior to the accident. The driver attempted to turn onto St. Alban's but lost control and hit the house.

Homeowner Alvey Gordon, 57, found the driver had hit the north side bay window, causing \$3,000 damage. The jeep suffered \$1,000 damage.

The driver fled the scene, but Gordon was able to give police a description. The suspect was a white male, aged, 25, 5'10", a stocky build, black hair, possible mustache, light brown waist length jacket and dressy jeans.



Part of the land Halton Hills council has put a \$10,000 deposit on as the site of a possible future municipal complex. The total package is almost 30 acres.