

Rec. dept. aims to have buildings accessible to the handicapped

The Halton Hills recreation department wants all its buildings to be accessible to all the public including the disabled, and handicap ramps are needed at several of the Town's public buildings.

Making it easier for the handicapped to get into Town buildings was a subject of considerable concern with residents from both Acton and Georgetown who attended the ward one councillors' drop-in Thursday night. Recreation director Tom Shepard was the guest speaker and Councillors Dave Whiting, Rick Bonnette, Ross Knechtel, and Russ Miller were also on hand to field questions.

The handicapped ramp into Acton arena,

planned for last year and delayed, was to go in the front doors of the rink but when it came time to nail down plans the recreation department found it should be moved to the side door so a hydro pole wouldn't have to be relocated. Last week, Shepard reported, a meeting with hydro officials revealed the pole will likely have to be moved anyway so staff is again looking at having the ramp go in the front door of the rink. It will be easier to put the ramp in the front door the recreation director said, adding that entrance won't necessitate the moving of emergency exits as would be required if the ramp went in the side door.

Originally Shepard put this ramp in his 1983 capital budget, but now it is being considered as a make work project for a federal job creation grant. Shepard explained for the ramp to be an eligible as a make work project it can't be a budget item. However, if the ramp is rejected as a make work project and it's not in the budget, there will be a problem. This problem isn't too serious though, council had indicated earlier this year that the ramp could still be built out of contingency funds included in the budget.

Shepard said if the ramp is approved by council then he hopes work can begin in the spring. He wants the ramp to be a priority project in the make work plan or in the budget, but cautioned as a make work project it doesn't have to be started until March 1984.

The make work grants cover more than just labour costs and Whiting suggested the job creation scheme doesn't just help local taxpayers because it will pay the cost of the ramp but will also employ people now on welfare, reducing Halton's welfare rolls.

Grants from the province to the municipality aren't keeping pace with inflation so Halton Hills must get every cent out of the provincial and federal government it can, Councillor Ross Knechtel said. While he realizes tax dollars come from all the same pockets regardless which level of government is doing the spending, he thought it was preferable to have the federal money come to Halton Hills since it will be spent somewhere.

Shepard explained quotes peg the ramp at costing \$4,000. While it isn't a big price tag project by itself, it's just one of 20 or 30 recreation department projects and all the provincial subsidies possible must be secured for these projects. Plans have been developed for the ramp.

Did Price urged Shepard make sure that once the handicapped go up the ramp they can get into the building, not like the ramp at the Acton Post Office. Ramps can be a great "monument" to the handicapped, but

they must also be safe, practical and have footing for the person pushing the wheelchair.

Shepard said he appreciated Price's comments, adding if the ramp project follows plans the front door steps into the rink will be adjusted. Staff has been looking at ramps at many public buildings and gathering information from all over.

"Splendid," said Price. He suggested once the ramp is built the engineer in charge of the project should be required to get in a wheelchair and use the ramp to make sure it works.

Taking well known handicapped Actonian Ron McKnight to Montreal last summer "really pointed out the problems of the handicapped" to the recreation director.

The Acton arena is just one of several public buildings, such as the Acton Library, all over Town where ramps are needed, Knechtel observed.

A handicapped ramp is needed at the Memorial Arena in Georgetown, Kit Wood said. Also there's no problem getting up the ramp at the Library-Cultural Centre in Georgetown, or through the main doors, but doors inside leading to the library are hard to open he said.

It's not just the handicapped who are having problems operating the door latches at the library, Shepard said. Staff is looking at different door handles for the library-cultural centre, but the fire department says the same type must be retained.

There is a handicapped ramp inside Alcott arena, Shepard noted. The side door into Memorial Arena is open for the handicapped to use and handicapped parking signs are up at recreation facilities in Town. The recreation department wants everyone, including the handicapped, to have access to its facilities and programs, Shepard added.

An elevator for the handicapped to use to get to the hall on the second floor at Alcott had to be dropped because the firm which submitted the low tender went bankrupt and other bids were too expensive. The elevator funds will be used to put in a new deck at the outdoor pool in Georgetown this spring because the department of health said the pool will be closed if it isn't replaced.

Anne Dodds, of Acton suggested Shepard visit the Victoria St. arena in Guelph and see the facilities for the handicapped. She urged handicapped parking signs be used in arena parking lots.

Shepard said the signs were up but were torn down. Whiting observed the Town and region will soon have a bylaw allowing vehicles not used by the disabled to be tagged and towed away when they are parking in spots reserved for the handicapped.



No, students from Stewarttown Public School weren't looking for the Loch Ness monster. Terry Dixon and Chris Hodgins tried on some of the equipment that Vince Patcheson brought from Seneca College as part of the school's 'Career Day'. Patcheson is Seneca's Underwater Skills Program Co-ordinator.



Stewarttown students were awed by what was on hand with one of the machines for Career Day. Bill Hollinger of Computerland in Toronto

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Ask 1/8 acre free for mobile home approval

Trying to legalize a mobile home which has been on their horse farm for the past two years may prove costly for the Courtneys, of the Halton School of Equitation.

The Regional staff want one-eighth of an acre of land given to the Region for possible widening of Steeles Avenue.

Mary Courtney termed the dedication of the land "unjust" and emphasized the co-owners live in the mobile home since with 75 horses someone must be on the premises at all times. The Courtneys live in the farmhouse. "We should not be asked to give up land."

Councillor Russ Miller agreed the Courtneys should be paid for their land.

Assistant Planner Bruce McLean confirmed the regional staff wanted the land free of charge and noted the Town's recommendation simply said the road widening be to the satisfaction of the

Region, but did not say donated. He said he was told the region wanted to negotiate.

Courtney said negotiations were never mentioned by regional staff, "It was simply a straight dedication."

Planner Ian Keith said he did not think the region should take the view they are entitled to the land for nothing.

Clerk Administrator Ken Richardson suggested Mrs. Courtney go back to regional staff and if not satisfied have her name listed on the agenda for regional council.

The Town's recommendation was amended to say the road widening must not only be to the Region's satisfaction but to the applicants' the Courtneys.

Rinks ready

This year the Town of Halton Hills Recreation Department is operating six outdoor ice rinks at the following locations—McKenzie Smith Middle School in Acton and in Georgetown at Joseph Gibbons Park, Harrison School, Emmerson Park and two (2) at the Fairgrounds.

87 Real Estate

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Report from Queen's Park

by Julian Reed
M.P.P. Halton-Burlington

Minister offered a private meeting with Jack Biddell, special adviser to the Minister on the financing of the deal, to both Opposition Leaders. While the offer was rejected by the Leader of the NDP, David Peterson attended the meeting, and afterwards described the wheeling and dealing leading to the sale as "the most amazing... game you've ever seen in your life."

The only "real money" government investigators have been able to identify to date is "\$152 million in mortgages coming from (Crown, Seaway and Greymac) which is depositors' money... no one can see any Arab money, no one can see any money from Kilderkin, no one can see money from Greymac Credit."

"We have some serious reservations still," he said. "There was no discussion about the depositors in Greymac Trust or Seaway Trust and we still want to be assured that those depositors won't be treated differently. We have to be assured there's going to be a full complete independent public inquiry into why this whole thing happened."

We are very concerned about the government's proposed legislation in this matter, particularly with respect to provisions which would prohibit legal action against the government and its servants to recover damages resulting from the sale of assets. Commenting on the "absolutely startling powers" which the legislation would confer upon the government, Peterson felt that there was "all the more reason for full disclosure of why such powers are required." If the Minister expects Opposition support for fast action, he should disclose more information, including how much Crown Trust has lost in recent months.