

# Halton force enthused over preventive policing

by Diane Hart

Preventive policing is being enthusiastically embraced by the Halton police force, but the only change to Halton Hills is the addition of an officer in a specific zone to handle low priority calls and encourage crime prevention, it was announced Thursday at Oakville headquarters.

Calling it "project visibility", Inspector Matt MacPherson of District 1 in Georgetown said the additional officer will increase the visibility of police officers in the area and will aid citizens in reporting suspicious activities to the police.

The zone the officer will handle is south of 10 Sideroad, between the two Town Lines down to Lower Base Line. There will be no cost to the force as the officer will be reassigned.

"We chose that area because officers are not frequently seen there," explained Inspector MacPherson, adding the vastness of the area makes it difficult for officers to maintain a visible presence.

Police Chief James Harding has repeatedly stressed that the north, with about 250 square miles to cover, is difficult to have a constant police presence, and it is for this reason that the north is not going into preventive policing like Oakville and Burlington.

But he hastens to add that the north will move into the program in the same way if

they get the manpower.

Asked if he will ask the Board of Police Commissioners for extra men this year, Chief Harding said no. "As our resource capabilities improve, then the north will go into the program on the same scale as the south," he said, adding this is not the year he will request manpower.

Stressing that the program is not necessary on a large scale in the north, Inspector MacPherson stated that officers in the north practice proactive policing all the time.

"The physical make-up of No. 1 District enables the police function to be a natural, community style of policing," Inspector MacPherson stated at the meeting. "Sixty-nine per cent of the police officers assigned to No. 1 district have over four years in the district and they are conversant with the area and the people."

He added that officers in No. 1 district log a monthly average of 400 hours on the foot beat.

An additional officer will also be assigned to a zone in Milton, with duties similar to the one officer in Halton Hills.

The officer will contact businesses to advise them on crime prevention, handle low priority calls and enforce the law. A crime prevention officer for Milton has been approved by police commissions and will aid this officer.

Last month, Metro Police Chief Jack Ackroyd announced that Toronto officers will be doing their own type of preventive policing, questioning people in the streets to try to get closer to the community.

Asked if Halton officers will be stopping citizens and questioning them, Chief Harding stated that he disagreed with the term "questioning."

"We'll be stopping people and talking to them, but questioning is a negative term... and I resent the hostile implications," he said.

"But I'll tell you this, I don't intend that criminals in Halton will be able to walk around—I don't intend Halton to be a haven for criminals," he stated, later.

Chief Harding mentioned that there will likely be public meetings in the future and he will be reporting to police commissioners on a quarterly basis about the program.

The program's main thrust is to get back to the people, by getting to know them and encouraging them to report suspicious activities. About 50 per cent of officers in Oakville and Burlington will be involved in the program.

Chief Harding stated in his opening remarks that one of the reasons for adopting the preventive policing is because of the Oakville woman, Delia Adriano, who was kidnapped from her home then later found dead in Milton.

# Housing workshop stresses need for study

by Steve Arnold

Even in affluent Halton there are families who must struggle to provide the most basic requirements for existence such as housing. And no one really knows what can be done to help them.

Regional councillors and staff, social planners, developers and real estate agents gathered recently to consider that problem in a special workshop entitled Housing Issues for the '80s.

Designed to assist regional councillors in defining the role they are to take in ensuring an adequate supply of all forms of housing in the region, the workshop came only days after councillors decided to stall a decision on whether to do a housing study this year.

The \$70,000 study, proposed by planning director Rash Mohammed, will examine the type of housing available in the region, the need for various types and the money available to correct whatever shortages are found.

The need for that study, and for changes in the attitude regional council takes toward government, was the dominant message delivered during the day-long event.

Ann Gabriel, manager of the Halton Housing Authority, repeated the message she delivered to councillors during their committee meetings earlier this month, noting only 20 per cent of the housing units she manages are for families. And yet more than half of the people waiting for geared-to-income units have children.

The waiting list for subsidized units has doubled in the last four years, she said, but it has been 10 years since the last family units were constructed in the region.

"There has been a steady rise in the number of needy families coming to us, but we're finding that as the economy worsens, families with the security of a geared-to-income unit are less likely to move out," she said.

Before anything can be done to meet this need, Gabriel said, a housing study must be carried out by the Region and a decision made about the role to be taken by local government.

"The decision, whatever it is, must be made. The Region must recognize its responsibility. This should be a 1983 priority," she said.

Bill Tom, chairman of the Halton Social Planning Council, said housing has many effects on social issues and that improving the standard of housing of some people could improve some social problems.

"As a teacher, I've seen the success of kids in school depends as much on what we do in the school as it does on their housing situation," he said.

Private developers speaking at the conference said they could meet most of the housing needs of the Region, but not without changes in Halton's controversial "front-ending" system of lot levies.

Under the regional policy, the first developer in an area is required to shoulder the entire cost of providing services to the land. The Region is committed to make its "best efforts" to recover a portion of that cost from future developers in the area and to make rebates to the first company.

Bert Arnold, a Georgetown lawyer specializing in development problems, said this system falls apart when large capital projects are required—the situation currently being faced in his area.

"Housing should be encouraged, there should be growth here in Halton, and if the municipality will work with developers, then things can happen. If there is co-operation, then the developer will work to make any agreement work," he said.

'Housing should be encouraged' —Arnold

## Study rejected

# Housing debate rages at region

Faced with three different recommendations about the controversial housing study, regional council chose to have the report on the study received and filed, rather than go ahead with it.

They voted 14-7 in favor of having the report filed.

"If this council does not take hold of this issue now, it's virtually criminal," claimed Burlington councillor Walter Mulkevic, strongly supporting going ahead with the study.

"It is clear that there is a crying need for government-supported housing, especially in the north where there are no units in Halton Hills and Milton," he added.

In a recorded vote, all Halton Hills councillors voted in favor of having the report filed and not proceed with the study, except for councillor John MacDonald.

"I don't like to see a lot of money go towards needless reports, but this study is obviously part of the rules of the game," said MacDonald. "We need the black and white numbers to show the province."

MacDonald added that about four people in Georgetown have asked him directly if there will be government assisted housing in Georgetown in the near future.

"We should take advantage of the money from the province," he added.

The province is willing to give the region \$35,000 for the study and does not have to be matched with regional funds. But director Rash Mohammed told council two weeks ago that the region will have to have another \$35,000 to complete the study.

There are, at present, only 18 government-assisted homes in North Halton. All are in Acton. The waiting list for govern-

ment-assisted units consists of 429 people—half of them families—in Halton.

Burlington Mayor Roly Bird believed the study was not needed.

"There is no need to spend money on a study to prove a need that has already been proven," he told council, adding that council already knows there has not been any government-assisted housing units built in the last 10 years.

"There is no purpose for a Cadillac study," said Mayor Bird. "Even if we went ahead with the study, it wouldn't be completed for two years."

The mayor commented that the recent housing workshop in Burlington served only as a "bitching session" for developers. "It was a grouch session rather than positive direction," added Bird.

Halton Hills councillor Dave Whiting, opposing the housing study, said that it "would be spending the taxpayer's money unwisely" if they proceeded with the study.

"There's \$40,000 for the transportation study, and now \$70,000 for this one means \$110,000 from taxpayers," he explained.

But other councillors believed the study, which forms the basis for a Municipal Housing statement, is the only way to eventually get funds from the province for housing units.

"Unfortunately, they hold the purse strings on this one," said Oakville councillor Anne Mulvale.

Mayor Harry Barrett of Oakville commented he believed this was the province's way of evading the housing issue.

"The Ministry says to do these studies so they put off making a decision about housing," he stated. "All they're doing is throwing a little money out as bait."

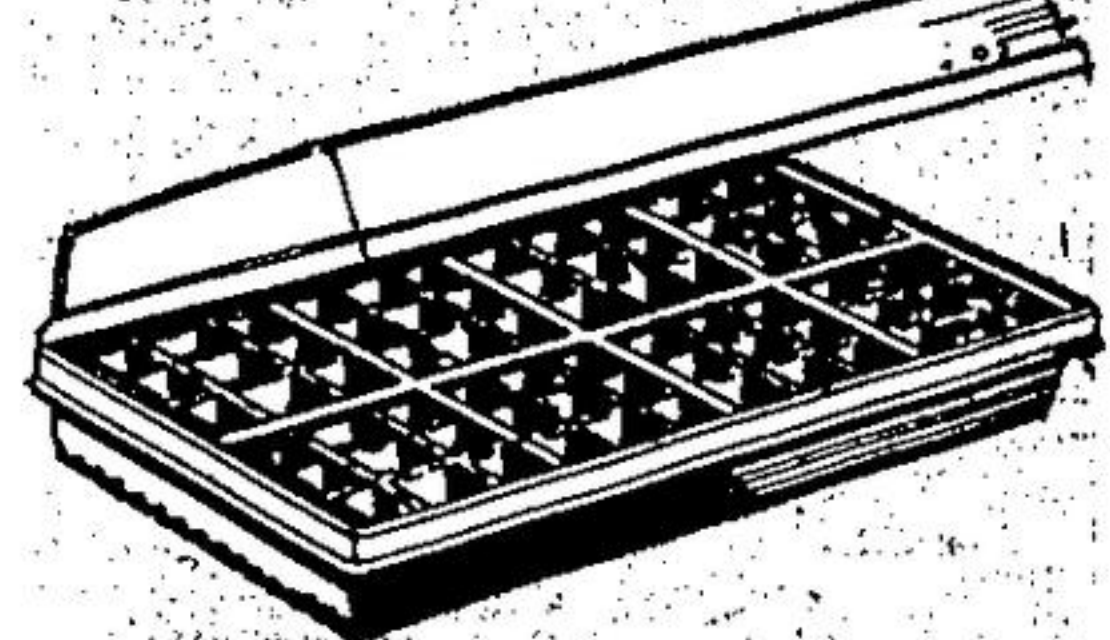
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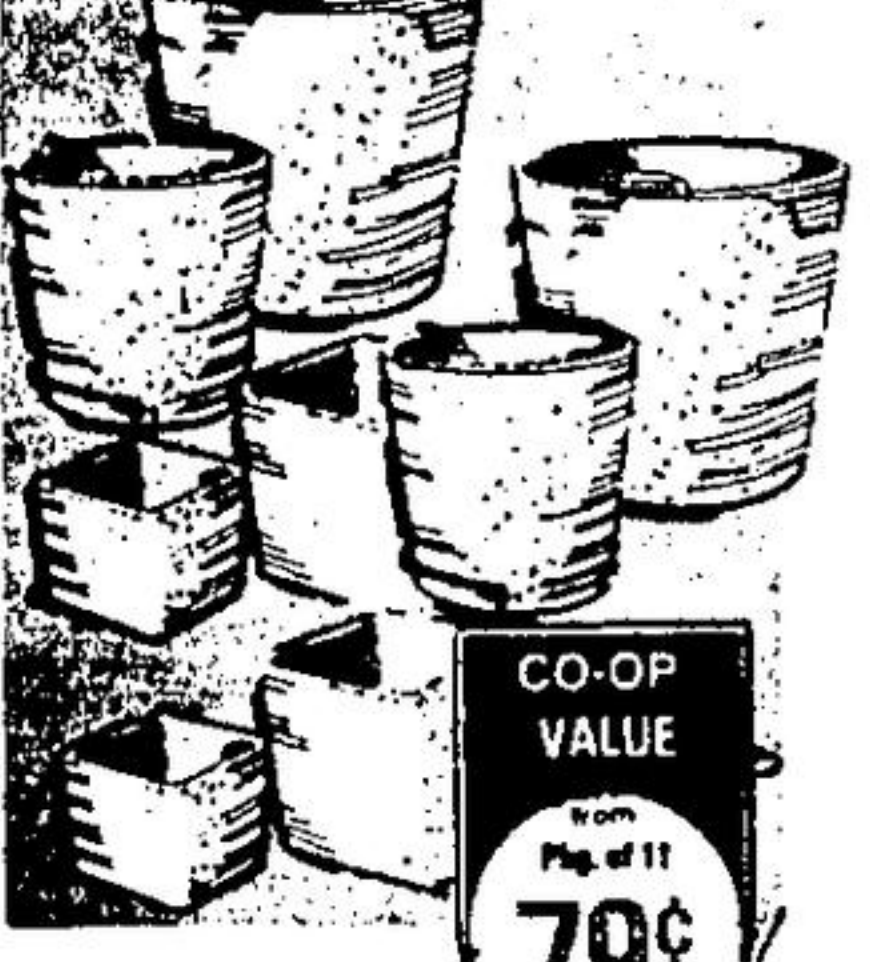
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