

The Acton Free Press

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You're telling wrong people you don't want complex

Most of the candidates out on the hustings for the Esqueping by-election tell us they are receiving plenty of feedback from voters on the municipal complex issue and what they're hearing isn't positive.

They're hard pressed to find anyone who is in favor of council's plan to buy property on the west side of Georgetown for \$600,000 and then build a municipal complex for \$4.4 million or more sometime in the next few years, possibly before the end of the current term.

Candidates are hearing the following: in tough economic times Halton Hills should set a restraint example and practise it; if there's spare cash sitting around in the Town till, rural roads come first; a complex isn't needed and Halton Hills isn't ready for one; if there is a need for more municipal office space put a small addition on the existing building, fix up the present building, and make do for another 10 years; the only acceptable site for a complex is the Trafalgar Rd. property and it's up to councillors to remove the stumbling blocks for this site; we can't afford and don't need or want a "municipal palace" or monument; the present system the voters don't find inconvenient and the Town's scattered office system isn't working too badly they feel; etc.

The feedback has been so loud and strong one candidate asked if the mayor and councillors who backed the property purchase ever talk to the voters. For obvious reasons this hopeful didn't want to be identified.

Anyway, this sort of feedback seems to jive with what two highly visible (because they run businesses

in Acton and Georgetown and their shops are permanent drop-ins) and vocal opponents of the project have been saying they are hearing for weeks now, councillors Rick Bonnette and Russ Miller. (Georgetown's John McDonald also voted opposed.) All say they've had dozens, and dozens and dozens of negative comments from ratepayers and compliments for their stands. The dissatisfaction they hear comes from voters in all four wards.

We must confess we've been hearing the same things as Bonnette, Miller and the candidates for some time too.

What's strange about this is you'll have a tough time finding a councillor who backed the property purchase who says, or at least will admit on or off the record, that they've heard more than a couple of comments.

Odd, isn't it? Well, not so really odd. It seems the taxpayers aren't shy about preaching their view to the already converted, those who voted against the project, or those they can influence to keep from adding another vote to the yes side.

We've been urging the many complainers we hear on this issue to contact councillors for months now. Most say what's the use, the councillors will do what they want anyway. Several have shot back that they have, but to no avail. They claim backers of the complex don't listen, become defensive when their position is questioned and seem bound and determined to follow through on the plan regardless of what the people they work for think or the political consequences.

Oh, the luxury of a three year term.

Anyway, it certainly appears we aren't talking, at least in sufficient numbers, to the right people.

If we wind up with a complex it will be our own fault.

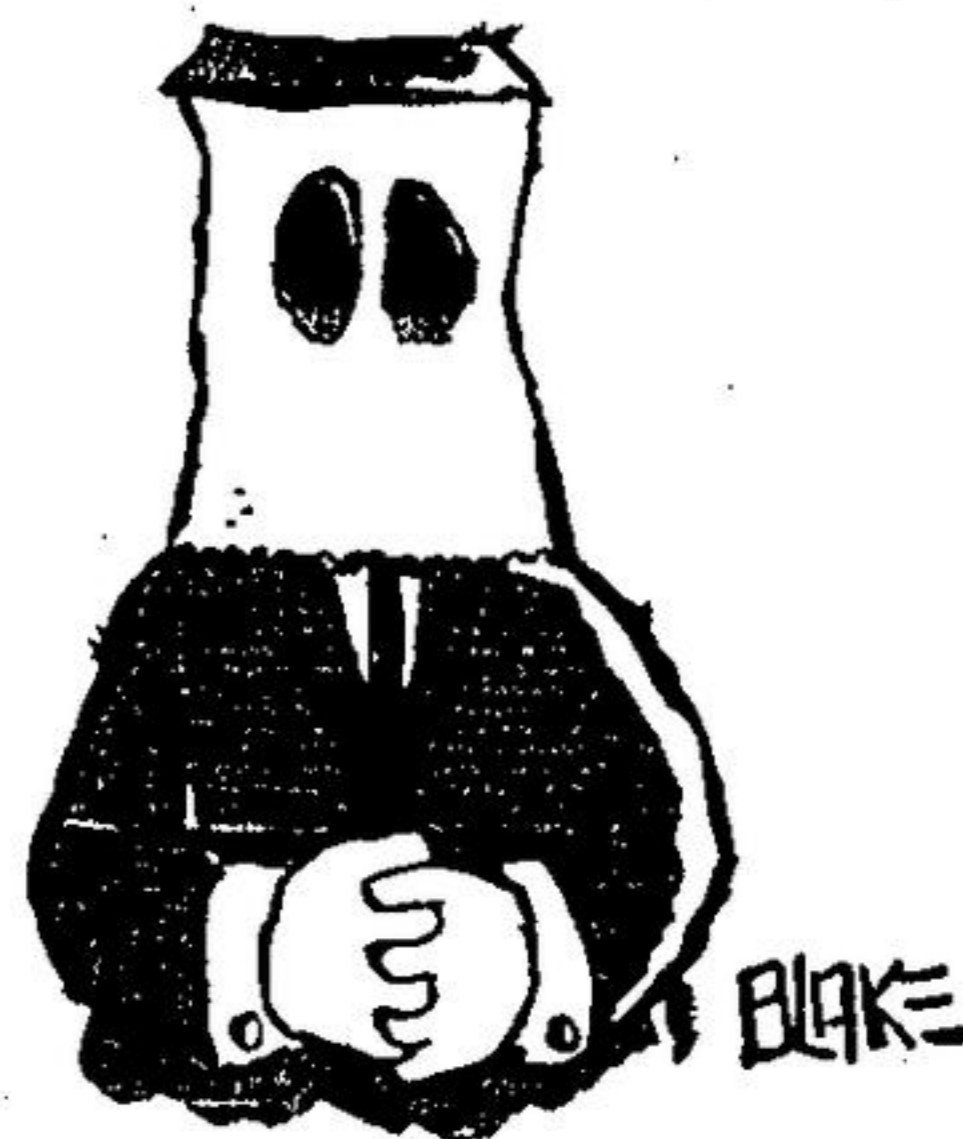
There's only been a smattering of letters to council and the paper voicing objections in the last 11 months since this issue raised its thorny head. Only small numbers are vocally complaining about the project to the votes which have to be changed on council, not a soul stood up at the public meeting last month about the municipal complex property purchase to say no and few attended the public meeting held in Georgetown months ago dealing with this issue. There's been no crowds or even a handful of voters hollering about this at Acton's council drop-in.

It's no wonder councillors who back the project say they believe voters elected them to make tough decisions, that this whole protest is a figment of the media's imagination, that people aren't really too strongly opposed to a complex. In fact, nobody disagreed with questioning councillors that a building is needed at the public meeting last month.

No, if this project goes ahead voters have no one to blame but themselves. They may have revenge in '85 at the ballot box, but that will be small consolation if the project's reached the unstoppable stage by then.

It seems people aren't talking to the right people and that's not surprising. It's easier to sit on one's tongue except in cases when you know you won't get an argument.—G.M.

What the well dressed Liberal is wearing these days



Coles' slaw

Even the dogs are repelled by yellow

The Town of Fergus celebrated the 150th anniversary of its founding this year and called it a Sesquicentennial. They turned it into a community celebration with a homecoming, school reunion, parades, founders' day and all kinds of tours and tournaments. Just to add some icing on the cake they staged an "Adopt a Hydrant" campaign.

Adopting a hydrant meant the person who agreed to look after the hydrant for a year must paint them with oils and maintain them for the balance of the year.

Well, that program really drew some interest. Hydrants previously noted only for their plain red paint suddenly became bearded Scotsmen, mounties, chiefs, convicts, hockey players and clergymen. The result also was that the town's Sesquicentennial committee identified dozens of hydrants that did not appear on out of date town maps.

People were going to Fergus just to see the hydrants and laugh at the caricatures. It became an international event. The Ministry of Tourism congratulated the town on its versatility. As a matter of fact probably more people knew where the town's fire hydrants were than at any time in the 15-year-old history of fire fighting in Fergus.

But there's always a fly in the ointment. Recently the Ontario Fire Marshal's office advised the Town all the decorated fire hydrants should be repainted yellow, all yellow. No little characters grinning out at the canine population.

Needless to say, Fergus officials were seeing red at the yellow dictum. But apparently the Ontario Fire Code requires, and has required since 1981, that all Ontario hydrant barrels be painted yellow with the ports color-coded to identify water volume.

A high ranking official of the Ontario Fire Marshal's office, Alan Dupuis, admits that seldom is that part of the code enforced. He told the Fergus Elora News Express that his office lists other towns which boast decorated hydrants



by Hartley Coles
Managing Editor

and no charges have ever been laid.

The mayor of Fergus, advised of the infraction, admitted he and another councillor knew of it last spring but it was felt that fire officials would turn a blind eye unless there was a complaint. Since the Ontario Firefighters Association held their August convention in Fergus this year and it was attended by brass from the Fire Marshal's office they obviously couldn't miss the unique hydrants. Probably admired them.

Mayor Biernes, meanwhile, sought his council's support to ask for an extension on the time the hydrants would have to be repainted—until the end of next September. Hydrants not decorated will likely get a yellow coat of paint.

But the irony for the mayor is that the ministry of tourism congratulated them on their hydrants. Another ministry says they should be painted yellow. A third government agency is spending money to celebrate Ontario's 1984 bicentennial.

He's right. Why not let the hydrants stay as they are until the end of 1984—and longer—as long as their appearance is maintained. They are probably more visible than ever.

Besides the Scottish founders of Fergus would probably turn over in their graves if they thought two coats of paint were applied when one would have done.

Back issues

10 years ago

October 17, 1973

The first sod was turned for the new \$350,000 Legion Hall. Legion president Bob Angell and Mayor Les Doby were present at the symbolic first turning of the soil that once was part of a farm owned by Cecil Nelles.

Waste disposal will become a county responsibility and representatives of the consulting firm of James F. McLaren Limited outlined the proposals to Esqueping council. Of the 14 proposed sites six are in Esqueping, four in Nassagaweya, two near Georgetown, two north of Acton and one in Burlington.

Repairs and painting in the Acton Arena are continuing in preparation for ice-making on the weekend. Arena manager Harold Townsley said the ice should be ready for skaters the following weekend. The ice machines were started up the previous weekend to drop the floor temperature to the level necessary for forming ice.

20 years ago

October 17, 1963

Regret is felt in Rockwood as the local Red and White store closed its doors. Owner, Mr. W. Lake, had to return to Drayton to look after another store there.

Acton firefighters spent two hours trying to extinguish a stubborn brush fire at the home of Gordon Fisher. The fire was thought to be reignited after smouldering for several days.

Two local men were fined a total of \$225 for supplying liquor to minors and three Acton Youths were fined a total of \$465 for drinking under age.

Grading and levelling was started on land formerly designated as a Ukrainian camp, adjoining the Breezes on Fairy Lake's west shore. Mr. Smallwood, a Toronto businessman, purchased the land several months before and hoped to open the resort the following spring.

50 years ago

October 12, 1933

Acton high school lost to Fergus in their first rugby encounter. Considering that this was the Acton lads' first experience with the game, the result was very satisfactory. Stewart Lantz, Harry Norton, Bing Ramsden and Bill Williams were the stars for the local team. Rev. Gifford is coaching the team.

The enrolment at the high school has reached a new high of 110. The first examinations will be held Nov. 8, 9 and 10 and the results will be published in the Free Press.

Threshing and getting up roots are occupying the attention of farmers these days.

Brampton joins the increasing group of towns where but one newspaper serves the community. The Brampton Banner and Times has been amalgamated with The Conservator.

Eramosa Plowing Match was held at the farm of Mr. Jas. McPherson adjoining Rockwood, the contest was keen in all classes. George Byrne is president and Albert Gray secretary-treasurer.

75 years ago

October 15, 1908

During his stay in Toronto, Ernest Worden was a member of the YMCA and wrote in the International Bible Examination on the Life of Christ. Ernest scored 98 out of a possible 100 percent.

Mr. John R. Kennedy, a local businessman, and Master Angus arrived home from a trip to Ogden Utah. During their month of absence the men ascended one of the highest mountains in the state and visited several noteworthy attractions.

The flat rate electric current users will have to get their meters installed before November 25 or it will be "lights out."

100 years ago

October 18, 1883

Beardmore and Co. have placed into position two new boilers, eighty horse power, for use in their mammoth new sole leather manufactory in course of construction. A large number of men are engaged in the building.

Mr. Wm. Lambert purchased property on Agnes St. belonging to Mr. John Nicol of Dunnville. He is building a new stable on the lot.

The Georgetown Herald, commenting on the Esqueping Agricultural Show held in Acton, says: "The Actonites are congratulating themselves and we must confess that a change has, in this instance, done some good. The show was a new thing for Acton, and its people put forth every effort to make it a very superior affair."

Our readers write

Join anti-nuke protest

Dear Sir:
We are increasingly aware through the media that disarmament talks intensify. The superpowers draw lines between each other and placate each other with promises. I fear for the outcome of such actions as a global citizen who can only observe.

Those who went to the polls in last year's disarmament referendum voted 70-80 per cent in favor of world-wide reduction in nuclear arms.

An opportunity is available for people who are concerned about their family, country and the future of the world, the opportunity to openly state your support for the

goal of disarmament is available on Saturday October 22. People on four continents who share the goal of a world free from the threat of nuclear destruction are organizing in a march of protest.

I urge you to act on your feelings and show your concern in the protest organized in Toronto. The protest organizes at University Ave. and Queen St. at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, October 22. Look for fellow citizens under the banner "Arms are for Hugging". Halton Hills Action for Nuclear Disarmament (HAND).

Sincerely
Brenda Kistner
74 Nelson Court

Fairboard thanks

Dear Sir:
The Directors of the Acton Agricultural Society would like to express our sincere thanks to all who worked to cover the Acton Fall Fair this year, and gave us the coverage that we needed.

Our thanks to those who worked on the paper, and our prize book, and those behind the scene, that helped to make our fair the success that it was.

We hope to have better weather for our 1984 fall fair but we will just have to wait and see what takes place.

Yours Truly,
John B. Rowe
Secretary-Treasurer

HANDs seeks supporters

Dear Sir:
This letter is to invite your readers to join the members of HAND (Halton Hills Action for Nuclear Disarmament) and millions of people around the world to demonstrate for a balanced, verifiable de-escalation of the nuclear arms race.

Saturday, October 22 is the day, and rally time for the march is 10:30 a.m. The assembly area is University Avenue, north of Queen Street.

It is hoped that this letter will encourage readers to write in their responses (pro or con) so that a public forum might take place through this "Letters to the Editor" column.

Yours sincerely
Eldon Comfort

Thanks for Fox Run support

Dear Sir:
On behalf of the committee for the Acton Terry Fox Marathon of Hope Run, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to all the people who contributed to a very successful day.

Although the weather was less than perfect the spirits of all the participants were not dampened. We thank all of those who endured the weather to complete their run, and all the volunteers who helped at the registration and counting tables.

Our thanks also go to the merchants and banks who had pledge forms available, and to all the merchants and businesses that donated to our cause. (IGA, O'Brien Meats, Hostess, A-B Foodland, Herrington Printing, McDonald's).

We also appreciate the excellent coverage provided by The Acton Free Press leading up to and including the day of the run.

Although our participation was down due to the weather, the pledge total of \$11,400 was above last year's total, and we sincerely thank everyone involved. You have shown that the courage and determination of Terry Fox will not be forgotten.

Sincerely,
Jon Hurst

Acton Terry Fox Marathon of Hope Run Committee.

Villa thanks

Dear Sir:
On behalf of the players and executive of the Acton Villa Soccer Club I wish to express our sincere thanks to the spectators, sponsors and the Acton Free Press reporter (Dave Dodds) for all the support given this past season.

Fred Blain
(President)

