No regional support for industrial park

Town council has shown interest in reviving plans for a 200-acre rural industrial site about which nine different companies have made "serious enquiries."

The project, first introduced as a 625-acre parcel in 1977, now spans 200 acres north of Norval between the Tenth Line and Regional Road 19.

Speaking on behalf of the property's four owners, lawyer Bert Arnold touted the "Georgetown Rural Industrial Park" as being ideal for dry, self-serviced industry, but Halton Region, he said, disagrees.

Arnold took exception to the region's recently-completed Rural Industrial Needs Study, which he said effectively kills any hopes Halton Hills might have of substantially boosting assessment by attracting rural industry.

Rural industry is generally warehousing and light manufacturing, operations that do not require urban water and sewer services. Stopping short of endorsing the project. council agreed to refer it and the regional needs study to town staff for further deliber-

ation. Of prime concern is the region's suggestion that only 100 acres of Halton Hills land needs to be designated for rural industry over the next two decades.

Town planning director Ian Keith, who generally supported Arnold's arguments, pointed out that such a restriction would allow only "incremental growth", with each new 100-acre industrial site, depending on the success of its predecessor.

While his clients waited for the town's official plan and the regional study to be completed, Arnold said, they've received nine "serious enquiries" from companies interested in the site, three of which were site-specific.

One of the three companies has made an offer for 75 acres of the site, Arnold said, and the owner has applied for a zoning permit to accommodate a manufacturing operation.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

WHOLE WHEAT

BANANA BREAD

1 c. SOFT WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR

Melt butter, blend in sugar until smooth.

-Add white flour sifted with salt and soda. -Add soft whole wheat flour and hot

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-Add eggs & banana.

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PURE CHOCOLATE SEMI-SWEET

BAKING CHIPS

FRUIT DRINK CRYSTALS

about 1 hr. (or until done).

% c. WALNUTS (optional)

Another sought 20 acres but is now locating in Burlington instead, he added.

As well, Arnold told council, six different land developers who do their own marketing have asked about the site, one of whom is among the largest in north Peel. At least three firms would like to see the overall project proceed, he said.

Unfortunately, Arnold explained, the regional study offers no support to the project. It analyzes historical data and makes questionable assumptions, he contended, to conclude in part that since Halton Hills never had any rural industry, it doesn't want any.

"When I read the report, I knew we wouldn't get a lot of rural industry in Halton Hills," Arnold said, citing the report's assessment of the town's industrial land sales year by year and predicting the same rate of growth over the next 20 years.

"Well, that's just not acceptable," he said. "It certainly shouldn't be acceptable in this town, where you've been restricted over the last ten years. They're binding you to historical data, there's no question about it."

Arnold rebutted a series of conclusions the regional report made about his clients' property, citing contradictory claims made by consultants hired by the owners.

"There is no support for anything they say about the land," he charged.

Planning director Keith advised council he too was "troubled" by the study's findings. He agreed with Arnold that it should have concentrated on market demand for rural industrial land.

Arnold noted that the site features excellent rail access, highway access from Toronto via Peel and ample water to accommodate rural industry. Consultants confirmed that the land is not agriculturally viable because of its topography, he said.

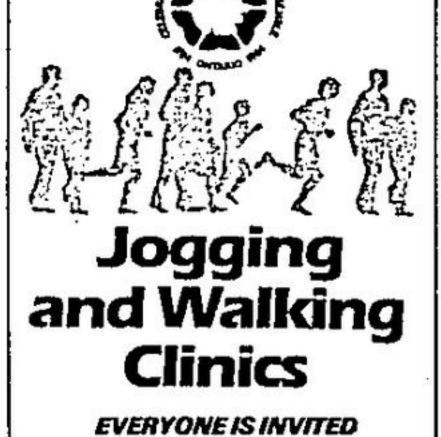


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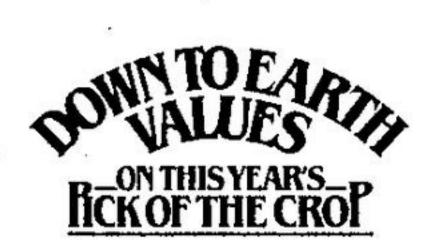
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