

### "In Camera" Meetings Must Be Stopped Now

Behind the issue of a fire chief or fire chiefs for Halton Hills lies the important question of open council meetings.

Should a council sit in a closed session to debate a point and then report a decision to a public meeting?

We would say no, and in this regard, we are in agreement with the efforts and aims of Coun. Ric Morrow to have as much council business as possible conducted in open forum.

The controversy surrounding the selection of a Halton Hills fire chief probably never would have developed if council had not met in camera, before it had formally taken office, and prepared a recommendation. Coun. Morrow disagreed with the selection, and said so, and also disagreed with the manner in which it was made, and said so.

We would ask Halton Hills Council to be very selective about closed meetings. The privilege of closed session is provided for in provincial legislation, but it is a privilege that can lead to abuse if applied liberally and with excuse rather than reason.

For it should be recognized that a closed session of council does not protect the matter, or individual, at hand so much as it does the councillors involved. It is easier to reach an arbitrary decision in secret than it is in public.

At his election last fall, Mayor Tom Hill spoke out in favor of open council meetings. And just last week Coun. Ern Hyde remarked in a newspaper letter that "during the year, hundreds of motions are passed and are handled in what we hope is an honest and democratic manner."

Coun. Hyde has made the point. Democracy applies to little government as well as big government. It must involve the people.

### Groups Should Work Together

Regional government in Halton Hills will not mean the end of local rural recreation organizations. Doug Collison, recreation director, wants to draw the groups into the overall municipal recreation structure.

The rural committees he is concerned about are primarily located in the old Esqueping township, he said, scattered through nine hamlets there.

"There are committees already established there," he told the Halton Hills administration committee last night. "We could work with these for starts."

Mr. Collison suggested the local groups be given powers of their own to organize local functions, and at the same time serve as a community liaison with the recreation department.

"If they want to run small programs, they can do it," he said. "If we want to run town wide programs we can do it through them."

**OWN AUTHORITY**

According to Mr. Collison's suggestions the local committees would have a large degree of authority over local facilities and would be responsible for scheduling their use for local sports group.

### Don't Change Address

Persons whose addresses have changed as a result of the formation of the four new regional municipalities on Jan. 1, 1974 need not notify the Ministry of Transportation and Communications of those changes at this time.

Changes will be made in the Ministry's records when new driver licences and new motor vehicle permits are issued. In the meantime, spokesman for

### NEWS IN BRIEF

**PREMIER BILL DAVIS** will be guest speaker at the annual winter meeting of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce on Wed., Feb. 13 at the North Halton Golf and Country Club. The meeting will also include the election of chamber officers for 1974.

**RED CROSS** Family Health and Home Nursing courses begin on Wed., Feb. 13 at 7:30 p.m. The 16 week course, to be held at St. John's United Church, Georgetown will include home safety tips as well as artificial respiration, the administering of medications, and the care of bedridden family members.

**THE FINANCE** and Personnel Committee of Halton Hills Council will recommend to council that a fund of \$6,000 for public relations be made available to mayor Tom Hill for public relations purposes. The recommendation followed discussion by committee members whether the mayor should have a separate fund for public relations or simply use council's public relations fund. The recommendation will go before town council at its next meeting on Feb. 4.

# Region Didn't Listen, Salary Approved

Halton regional council awarded itself a pay raise to \$8,500 last week without even mentioning money and in spite of a short shouting match with the protesting chairman of a Burlington citizens committee.

Leo Haber, chairman of Burlington regional investigation committee arrived at the building bearing a 1,000 name petition but because his organization did not contact the county early enough to appear on the meetings agenda, he was not allowed to speak in spite of support from Oakville Coun. Carl Erikson who proposed a motion to allow a hearing of the "Citizens' group presentation." "It stinks of Watergate," Mr. Haber shouted, but the new council salary became official when councillors approved by-law 3-74. "A bylaw to confirm

the proceedings of the council... from October 18 to Dec. 31, 1973."

Included among the resolutions, passed while the council elect still held no official authority, was the motion on Oct. 29 that set the new salary.

**SALARY ESTABLISHED**

At that meeting the regional rate of \$8,500 was established, and a sharp increase above the \$4,000 annual stipend made to county councillors in 1973.

The approval yesterday was made in spite of an attempt by Oakville councillors who proposed a new salary of \$4,500. The motion was made by Mr. Erikson following an agreement made at Oakville council at its regular meeting, Monday, to ask regional council

to reconsider the proposed \$8,500.

Both of Mr. Erikson's motions were overturned. Council indicated it would not reconsider, and that it would not allow Mr. Haber to speak. Shouting from the gallery, Mr. Haber then demanded that council take a recorded vote on the motion to consider salary increases separately from the past business included in by-law 3-74.

That motion lost by a vote of 13-10.

**NOT DEMOCRATIC**

"This is not democratic," Mr. Haber shouted at one point. "You have no opposition party."

One Oakville councillor, Bill Mason, replied however, "I am the opposition."

The delegation from Halton Hills voted solidly against the motion to discuss salaries separately. Coun. Ric Morrow, a critic of the increase in the past, was absent from the meeting.

Coun. James Watson of Milton, proposed following the vote, that councillors, on record against the increase, should not accept it. He went as far as suggesting the T-4 ships of the dissident 10 councillors should be checked to see if they were using the money.

Mr. Watson, who voted against the motion to discuss salaries, was bitterly critical of Mr. Haber.

"This man has received the publicity he wanted," Mr. Watson said prior to the vote.

"He ran in the last election and he lost. Let's get on with it."

Mr. Watson proposed that council approve a penalty clause that would dock council salaries by \$95 for each council and committee meeting they missed. The only exceptions his motion allowed, would be during a one month annual vacation, which would have to be reported in advance, through illness, and through other municipal or provincial functions approved by the regional council which conflicted with the regional timetable.

It was the final motion that stirred the most antagonism. Halton Hills Mayor Tom Hill asked, and was told that meetings of the area councils would not constitute valid exceptions to the rule unless they were approved by the region.

**BRING CALENDAR**

"You think I'm going to come down here with my calendar for the year when we could be changing meetings one day in advance," he said.

Mr. Hill observed he was the senior member of the regional council, and added: "Since I started coming to this building I've missed one committee meeting."

"But," he added, "I'm not going to be clocked. If I have an important local meeting, I'm going to go to it."

Mr. Watson's motion lost on a vote of 14 to 9.

The councillors who voted in

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## Halton Councillor Pay Scale Second Highest In Region

Local councillors will now draw larger pay checks than in any other Halton municipality, with the exception of Burlington.

The new local pay rates, established earlier this week, will give Mayor Tom Hill an annual salary of \$11,000 while councillors will receive \$5,400. Those rates are exceeded in Burlington where Mayor George Harrington collects an annual \$15,500, while his councillors get \$5,800.

In Oakville however, Mayor Harry Barrett collects only \$9,000. Councillors there receive \$4,000. That council decided at a meeting early this week to preserve the old rate, at least for the time being, and sponsored a move to bring down salary rates at the regional level. The attempt was unsuccessful.

In Milton, Mayor Anne MacArthur now collects \$10,000 while councillors there receive \$4,000. That rate is a marked increase over salaries paid to Milton councillors last year.

Mayor Brian Best collected \$5,000 while his councillors were paid at a rate of \$25 per meeting they attended.

The new rates in Halton Hills jump sharply upwards from pay given to municipal councillors here last year in Georgetown, Esqueping and Acton.

The highest rate paid in 1973, was in Georgetown: \$4,500 to the mayor and \$2,000 to the councillors. In Esqueping, where the lowest rate applied, Mayor Hill collected \$2,700 as reeve while councillors collected \$2,000.

Pay was higher in Acton where Mayor Les Duby collected \$4,500, but councillors there collected \$2,000.

The new local rates are in addition to the money Mayor Hill and four regional councillors collect for their duties on the regional council. The regional council confirmed new salaries of \$8,500 this week, up from \$4,000 paid to county councillors last year.

## Developer Plans Seniors' Housing For Acton Area

An unidentified local developer plans to construct senior citizen units within the downtown shopping area of Acton according to Coun. Les Duby.

Coun. Duby said however, the project will be delayed until Halton Hills officially applies to the Ontario Housing Corporation for senior citizen accommodation within Acton.

A need study, that would be carried out by the housing corporation would determine the number of units to be constructed.

Coun. Duby would not identify the developer and would not specify the area the units are to be constructed in. He explained that publicity given to a previous attempt to purchase land for a senior citizen development resulted in fluctuating land costs that eventually soared higher than the OHIC was willing to pay.

The problem facing the project now, however, is a lack of an application from the community.

"As far as I was concerned," said Coun. Duby, "and my council was concerned, we had a standing application before the housing corporation."

He reported, however, that the OHIC does not share that view.

"The land negotiations are no problem," he noted, "if the town gets in a letter of need."

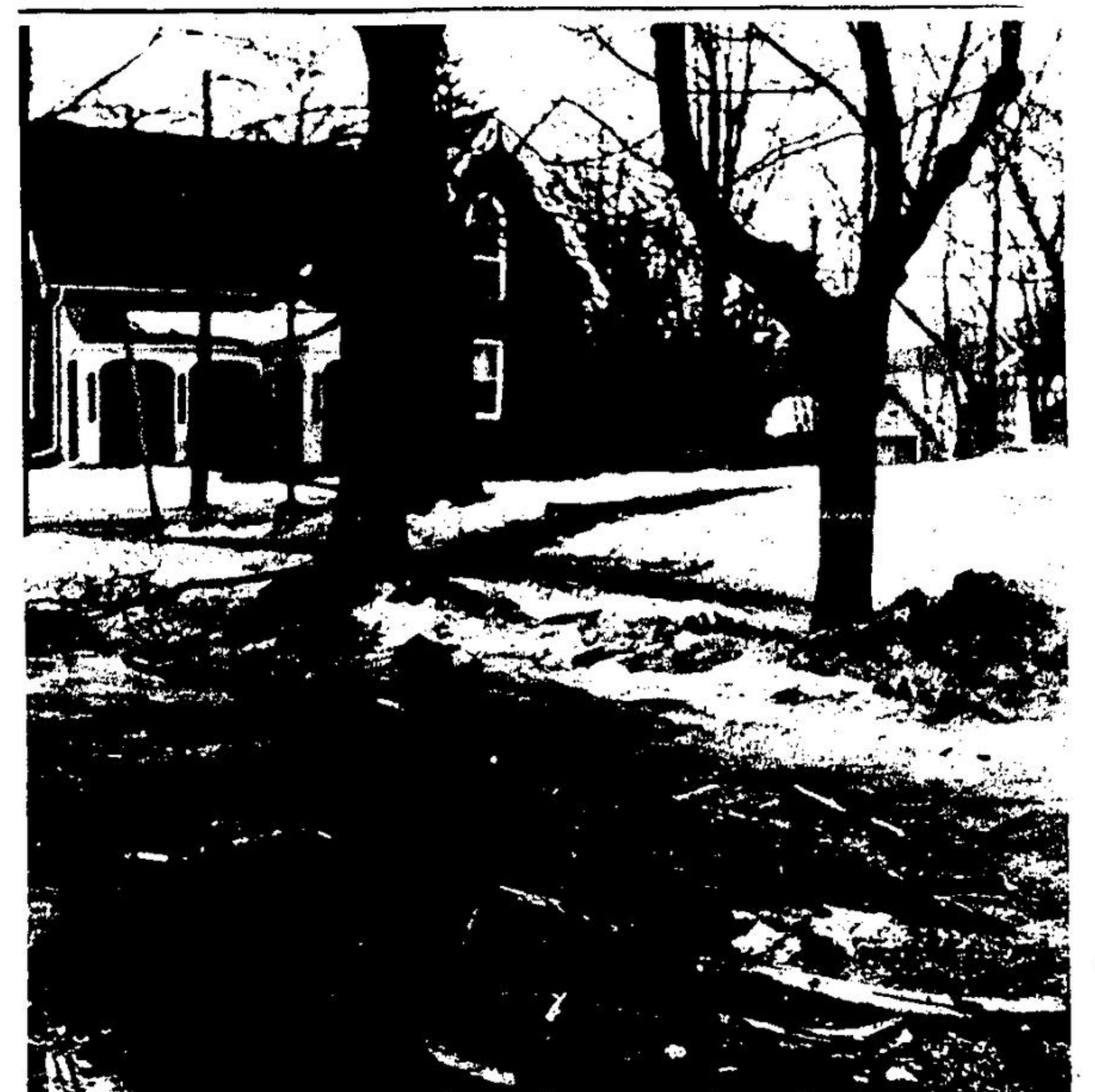
**Quarter Million Assists Project**

The Federal minister of industry, trade and commerce, Alastair Gillespie, has announced approval of a \$1 million loan from the federal government's winter capital project fund for a recreation complex in Georgetown.

Loans from the winter capital project fund carry an incentive feature; all direct on-site labor costs incurred during the winter months are 100 per cent forgiven. On-site labor costs incurred during summer months are 50 per cent forgiven. They are paid for by the federal government and subtracted from the amount of the loan.

Mr. Gillespie noted that this facility will improve the community recreation program in Georgetown. Georgetown has an active minor hockey and figure skating program with more than 1,300 children taking part. The present arena is more than 50 years old with a small ice surface that cannot adequately accommodate the present demand.

Construction for which this loan is to be used, is expected to be completed in the fall of 1974.



**WIND STRIKES AREA**

Strong winds which struck the area over the weekend caused damage throughout Halton Hills. Above, limbs from trees were torn off as winds raged through the town at speeds up to 60 miles per hour. Frank Morette, general superintendent of public works, said clean-up crews spent more than seven hours Sunday removing and cutting up trees. In Acton, a fallen tree blocked Main Street North until the work crews arrived at 7 a.m., he said. Mr. Morette noted as well telephone poles were down on the eighth line between Sideroads 10 and 15. Acton Hydro Commission also reported problems resulting from the winds. A power failure there blacked out half the town for two hours on Sunday morning. It is believed the failure originated in Guelph.

### Money Must Be Justified

If an organization wants money from Halton Hills town council, it will have to be justified.

This is the core of a recommendation the finance and personnel committee of Halton Hills made to council following a Monday evening meeting.

The committee recommended that all requests for grants include a financial statement, names of officers, number of members, number of members residing in Halton Hills, and whether any other grants have been applied for.

This recommendation followed three requests for grants which appeared on the committee agenda.

Coun. Ernie Sykes suggested that council should wait for the Halton regional policy concerning grants before making a decision. He noted that grants directed at the regional government might be directed to the various local municipalities.

Coun. Harry Levy asked that a report be drawn up to show what grant requests have been received by council. Coun. Levy pointed out that one of the grant requests was from Pineview Olympic Minor Soccer Club and that all previous athletic grants had been channeled through the recreation committee.

Councillor Sykes noted that Halton regional government was considering grants from both regional and municipal levels, provided that both levels are aware of the other's grants. He added that uniform application and justification of the grant were both essential.

A discussion on what requirements were necessary for a grant application followed, resulting in the recommendation to go before Halton Hills councillors next Monday.

### March 1 Likely Interim Tax Date

It appears that March 1 will be the earliest possible date for interim tax billing in Halton Hills.

Town treasurer Lloyd Peterson told members of the finance and personnel committee that due to the slowness of the provincial assessment office, interim tax billing would not be out before March 1. Mr. Peterson noted that it had been hoped that the interim billing would be out by Feb. 18.

The discussion prompted Coun. Harry Levy to ask that the committee provide Halton Hills council with a recommendation that "in view of the delay caused by the assessment department, that the minister be advised of our predicament, of our limited funds, and that we should have interim grants."

Coun. Ernie Sykes added "And make it as strong as possible."

The announcement was prompted by a letter to council from John White, Minister of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs concerning Halton Hills' request for start-up grants for the municipality.

The letter stated that grants were provided on an unconditional basis and not on individual priorities.

Mr. Peterson remarked "there isn't a grant we get that's not conditional."

The letter also stated that the minister expected payments to the region of Halton would increase by \$1.4 million this year while payment to Halton Hills will double in 1974.

Coun. Sykes said the minister's letter did not include anything council had asked for. "We asked for start-up grants to cover the consolidation of three municipalities into one," he said. He asked if Halton Hills was eligible for part of the \$1.4 million allotted to the region.

Clerk-administrator Doug Pritchard replied that the distribution of regional monies was laid out by formula.

Coun. Levy added that before regional government came into effect, council was to receive additional monies. Mr. Peterson replied that this had been abandoned.

"I haven't had any word on any kind of a grant," he said. Coun. Levy voiced his feelings on the subject when he said "Are we to go into debt? Cost ourselves more money? It's ludicrous!"

"We have to ask ourselves 'Are we in dire need of funds until the interim taxes come out?'" he said.

Mr. Peterson replied that Halton Hills was currently using Georgetown's surplus funds.

"But this money isn't earning us all that it could?" Coun. Levy inquired.

### Fire Chief Has New Office

Fire Chief Mick Holmes and a recreation director for the Acton area will be provided space in the former Acton municipal building on Mill Street.

The building will also be used by the regional social and family services department and by the children's aid society if council approves a recommendation made last night by the administration committee.

The committee based its proposal on a letter from Acton Coun. Garnet McKenzie who recommended the former clerk's office be utilized to serve three tasks.

Mr. McKenzie said the room could be used as a local office for Mayor Tom Hill and for special occasions. As well, he said it could be provided "one or two days a week" to the children's aid and to the social and family services.

Finally, he suggested the room be used as a local meeting place for ward one councillors.

Two offices would remain available in the building to be used by the fire chief and by a recreation director, he said.

Mr. McKenzie said locating Mr. Holmes in the municipal building would provide him with telephone service and with typists and a duplicating service.



**FOUR TEENS KILLED**

Four teenagers died in the wreckage of this late model Mustang when it collided with an Ontario Hydro truck on Highway 7 about one mile east of Norval last Wednesday. Dead are two Georgetown brothers, Leonard and Stephen Yeo, Harry Christie, and Donna Doucette, of Bramalea. Another passenger in the car, Cathy Hedegaard, was rushed to Peel Memorial Hospital where she is listed in satisfactory condition.

According to Snelgrove OPP, the Hydro truck was turning, left from the Fifth Line onto Highway 7 when the crash occurred. The impact tore the top half of the Mustang right off and sent pieces of the car hurtling as far as 100 yards away. The three boys were going to look for a job in Brampton as they had all been laid off the week before.

Both girls, who are 15, attended Bramalea Secondary School.

### INSIDE

**PUPILS AT Pineview Public School** raised money for a bird sanctuary in Streetville. See pictures and story Page 6a.

**THE SECOND** of the weekly "How to..." series shows how your socks are manufactured. See Page 4a.

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