

REGION OFFICIAL PLAN

Some issues aired well, others not

Although the issues of economic development, growth settlement and farming were well aired at regional open house last Wednesday at Acton Public Library, that of the housing mix had "not enough discussion," regional Coun. Pat McKenzie said.

6,900 growth could go to between 7,000 and 7,500 with the balance of the capacity turned over to industry.

Vic Birstow said more industry is needed in Acton to equalize the tax base. Acton is overloaded with homes, he said. "The tax base is out of balance."

Birstow explained that the tax base became unbalanced when the population rose to its present level from about 5,000 without any increase at all in industry.

SACRIFICES
"Industry is needed in the Acton area even if some sacrifices are necessary," Birstow said.

To accommodate more industry, Black Creek's capacity could be enlarged, he said.

As far as economic development and taxes were concerned, Birstow said, "More housing will not help the homeowners."

Nielsen, in agreeing with Birstow's comments, said: "We must have available capacity at the sewage plant for industry."

Support was voiced for the establishment of an industrial development commission to attract industry to the area.

On the issue of housing, Nielsen said: "There is an absolute need for rental housing in Acton." Even condominiums are desirable, he said. "There's a definite need for any kind of low-cost housing."

One of the region's housing objections is to increase the amount of housing available to handicapped persons and to this point one man urged to "consult the handicapped first and don't let any fool engineer... design their accommodation."

AGRICULTURE
"When looking at the agriculture business, there are no nice easy solutions. It's very difficult to know how to deal with agricultural matters." Agriculture is "a very thorny question," region planner Ed Babb said. Two area farmers at the meeting said they disagreed with the region's entire agricultural objectives. The permanent designation of prime farmlands for agricultural use, the provision of incentives to encourage farming and the development of strong severance policies to minimize farmland erosion and settlement sprawl are

needed. Although Mr. McKenzie said the objectives had been prepared with the help of the Halton Federation of Agriculture, the farmers repeated they had no use for any of the proposals.

Mr. Burnett said that land can be looked at either as a commodity to be sold or as a resource. (Farmers in the area have told the Herald that is exactly how they look at the land—as a resource to provide them with a living, then as a commodity to provide them with a living after they retire from active farming.)



HISTORY WALK DRAWS A CROWD SUNDAY

About 40 Georgetowners participated in the second annual historical walk through Georgetown led by John McDonald of the Esquimes Historical Society Sunday.

The group met at Knox Presbyterian Church where Mr. McDonald showed slides of Georgetown then and now. Then they proceeded down Main Street, along Mill Street,

up Guelph Street to Dayfoot Drive and ended the tour at St. John's United Church. En route Mr. McDonald pointed out 17 historical buildings.

A sunny afternoon, the weather was excellent for the one and a half hour trek through town.

Lumber mart application turned down by board

Planning board turned down an application by Gus Cavallo to build a lumber and hardware retail outlet on his property on Highway 7.

Bill Kent, representing the neighbours surrounding the proposed site where Lumberland was to be built, protested the construction.

He objected because the proposed home improvement centre would be located directly behind a row of about 15 houses, and "it would be like living in daylight all our lives" since bright lights would be mandatory to discourage vandalism. Area residents are also concerned about possible dust, pollution, increased noise, and more traffic especially at night when trucks deliver supplies.

He added that the building would be a fire hazard due to limited water supply.

Mr. Kent said the lumber centre would decrease the property value of adjacent homes. Less than two years ago, the "fully treed property was bulldozed to bedrock."

Coun. Russ Miller, who visited the property recently, said he is worried area wells will be contaminated if the home improvement centre is erected because the formerly swampy Niagara escarpment land has been stripped down to bedrock with little topsoil covering it.

"They (neighbours) have a really strong case against it," said Mr. Miller.

Walter Sopinka, solicitor for Mr. Cavallo, said his client planned the make the retail centre "aesthetically pleasing" by landscaping the property, storing lumber inside in a 20,000 square foot room, erecting signs facing Highway 7 so barely visible to the neighbours situated nearby.

He said, special lights which reflect onto the building would be installed, "so light would not shine into yards (of homes)."

He told Mr. Kent not to worry about the home improvement centre being a fire hazard since its proposed location is 400 feet from the

nearest house. He added traffic on Highway 7 is already heavy and the proposed lumber yard would only have 30 parking spots.

Though the solicitor said Mr. Cavallo would be willing to accept a permit with con-

ditions, Russ Miller pointed out there are already four such centers in Halton Hills and the committee unanimously rejected the application. The issue will go to council, then the Niagara Escarpment Commission where the first application was made.



NATIONAL JAYCEE WEEK

Jaycee president Larry Nicholls mounts the Jaycee sign on the outside wall of their new meeting place, Glen Williams town hall. Looking on are Jim Akers and Tony Chiovitti. Paul Atkinson helped too. Because this is national Jaycee week, the Jaycees are taking Sunshine School children to Niagara Falls, Sunday.

Can't spare men

Although Halton has police officers qualified to teach a new training program at the Ontario Police College, the force can't spare them, police chief Ken Skerrett told the police commission, Thursday.

The police college had asked if one or two of Halton's officers could be spared for 2 years minimum.

Each officer, as well as having his moving expenses paid for, would get \$200 per month over and above his regular wage.

"We have members on the force qualified," Chief Skerrett said, but with a nine week training program of its own and policing all of Halton County formerly served by the provincial police, "we are using them ourselves."

Skerrett said the force could afford to pay the overtime necessary to replace the man, "but we can't afford to lose the expertise."

"The region is just getting the local point of view," Mr. Doby said.

Following the meeting he said the public transportation issue "bothers me." Local transportation systems need heavy subsidies by taxpayers, and "we can't pay for this—another subsidized item," he said.

WELLINGTON COUNTY? The meeting which began with a remark made in only half jest that Acton should not be a part of Halton but part of Wellington County instead because it is oriented to the draft goals and objectives similar to the region's supplement in county newspapers but in more detail.

Acton merchant Paul Nielsen said Acton's difficulty is the limits to its growth imposed by the capacity of Black Creek to accept sewage.

He said that Acton's Chamber of Commerce has petitioned Halton Hills council that commercial development be confined to its present level and that more high density areas be established to help sustain the central business district.

Assistant town planner Ron Burnett said that when the expansion to Acton's sewage treatment plant is completed, it would have the capacity equivalent to a population of 10,000 with a current population between 6,800 and

6,900 growth could go to between 7,000 and 7,500 with the balance of the capacity turned over to industry.

The crime solve rate of Halton police in District 1 has fallen below fifty percent and is only a single percentage point above the regional rate.

The crime solve rate for August in District 1 serving Halton Hills and urban Milton is 47 per cent, down seven per cent from July, according to figures released last week by Halton police.

Of a total of 333 cases investigated by District 1 police in August, 40 were unfounded. Theft-related crimes, including robbery, break and enter, motor vehicle theft, shoplifting, possession of stolen goods and frauds, numbered 130. Of that total, 78 were for theft under \$200.

Across the region, assaults are up to 74 from 61 in July an increase police commission chairman Gier Magnuson

called "substantial." Police Chief Ken Skerrett said police are responding to a greater number of family fights between 8 and 9 a.m. Before, said the chief, most fights took place after hotels had closed for the night.

In District 1, 19 assaults were investigated in August, two more than in July and June respectively. Liquor offences in August dropped to their lowest level in three months. There were 36 cases. There were 58 in July and 37 in June.

Drug offences, one-sixth of which total occur in District 1 numbered seven in August, up one from July and the same as June.

The enforcement of municipal bylaws has steadily crept upward from 35 in June, 47 in July to 51 cases in August.

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