



Members of Local 8603, United Steelworkers of America on the picket line at Disston Canada Ltd. in Acton.

DISPUTE OVER WAGES, COST-OF-LIVING Steelworkers strike Disston

About 120 members of Local 8603 of United Steel Workers of America walked off the job at Disston Canada Ltd. in Acton at noon Monday to back contract "proposals". They have been without a contract since Feb. 1 when a two year contract expired. The employees were in a legal strike position midnight Sunday but the strike was postponed until the union and management could get together for more talks at 9 a.m. Monday.

The biggest stumbling blocks local president Jack Walker told the Herald Monday, are a cost-of-living clause, which was in the last contract but which the company wants to exclude from the new contract and wages. Mr. Walker said the union has proposed an 80 cents per hour increase in wages while

the company has offered five per cent. The union is also seeking wage parity for the female workers in the plant. The men's rate is from \$4.60 to \$5.80 per hour; the women's is from \$4.51 to \$4.53 per hour. The union also wants a one-year contract.

The union has proposed a lead-hand training rate for employees, a change in the holiday structure and a dental plan. Mr. Walker said the company offered on Monday morning a 100 per cent dental plan, fully paid semi-private hospital sick benefit and a five week vacation after 23 years.

Mr. Walker stressed that the union is still open to negotiations with the company at anytime.

Disston Canada Ltd. recently gave 19 workers notice of layoff. Mr. Walker said. The union executive went to the membership

to ask if they would take a four-day work week in lieu of having 19 members laid off and the vote was 100 per cent in favor of the layoff which included the 19 who were to be laid off, he said. The workers thought it unfair to work at lower-rated jobs.

Company president Tom Shields said Tuesday that he had no wish to discuss negotiations with this newspaper.

He said he had no idea when talks with the union would begin again.

A rumor circulating on the picket line Monday afternoon indicated that the company was in no hurry to make an early settlement because its export licence had expired and new one would not be forthcoming until sometime in June. Mr. Shields said there was no truth to the rumor.

Acton townhall saved from wrecker's ball

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald Staff Writer

Acton has saved its old Townhall - provided it can find funds in its own pocket to pay for the restoration project.

Halton Hills council changed its mind about a demolition order at a special meeting Monday. A delegation of more than 60 Acton-area residents, backed by petitions bearing 2,025 signatures, and a number of youngsters bearing signs with slogans like "Down with the NEW" packed council chambers for the meeting.

Council reversed its decision on the basis of a brief presented by George Elliott on behalf of Acton residents.

Council decided that consulting engineering firm Alan Zeegen Associates be asked to prepare the specifications for adding a second story to the existing Acton Fire Hall; that a citizens committee be appointed to co-ordinate fundraising activities through all provincial government and private sources and pay for the restoration of the hall, and that Halton Hills parking authority be requested to report on alternatives to putting a parking lot on the site of the old building.

When he felt that council had belabored the point of how the project would be funded just a bit too far a former Acton councillor, Ted Tyler told council that Acton had "never asked Esqueing to pay for anything for them and if you're so concerned about that give Acton back to its citizens."

When the applause and cheering died down Mayor Hill retorted that he'd be willing to accompany Mr. Tyler to Queen's Park to "talk to the powers that be and get Halton Hills split back up the way it used to be."

In his brief Elliott said that money to finance the restoration of the building could be found through grants from Wintario, the ministry of culture and recreation, and the Ontario Heritage Foundation as well as by public subscription.

He urged that council spend the \$40,000 reported to be the cost of demolishing the structure in a constructive rather than a destructive manner.

Councillor Russ Miller quickly pointed out that according to engineers the demolition cost would be \$8,500 to \$10,000, not \$40,000.

Elliott went on to say that while the Town Hall restoration is not a matter requiring immediate action, Acton firefighters' need for extra space is pressing.

He urged that work on a second story to the firehall begin at once with an attempt to make its facade compatible with the townhall. He contended that by converting a window at the rear of the stage area into a doorway the auditorium of the townhall would be available to the firefighters if they needed extra training space.

Since parking space for the firemen is also a problem, Elliott suggested that the Town purchase the adjacent property south of the Hall and turn it into a parking lot exclusively for the firefighters. The alternative would be to make it a municipal parking lot and forbid on street parking for anyone but firemen.

In justifying restoring the hall, Elliott denied that it has been empty for 25 years. Acton Citizens' Band used the stairs of the Hall until the bandhall was completed in 1966, he said. During those years no plaster ever fell off the ceiling although the whole building vibrated when the siren went off.

This, he felt, gave further credence to the citizen's contention that the building is structurally sound.

By moving the police office to a more visible location such as the vacant Dills Stationery Store its quarters could be turned into a combined meeting room and municipal museum. The Chamber of Commerce and the agricultural society have both expressed interest in such a room, he said.

The upstairs of the Hall could be used for larger meetings, social events, and small theatricals, all of which could return revenue to the town in the form of rent. Elliott pointed out that there is presently a shortage of licensable moderate-sized space in Acton and the townhall auditorium would be ideal for groups of 150 to 250 people.

Ward 2 Coun. C. F. Patterson pointed out that "the farmers in my ward haven't got the bucks to pay for this project" and wanted to know how the Acton citizens hoped to fund the restoration.

Elliott pointed out the grants available to them and repeated his belief that money for the project could be found in the Acton area.

G. W. (Pat) McKenzie, councillor from Ward 1, remarked that the Hall had "just sat there so long now we're really going to have to hustle to find an excuse to preserve it". He estimated that restoring the building would cost \$400,000.

That's one mill for 10 years over all of Halton Hills or five mills for 10 years in Acton," he said.

McKenzie also mentioned a report made to Acton council 10 years ago which said that since the building facade was made of soft bricks the entire structure might require re-bricking if repairs were undertaken.

When Mayor Hill pointed out that the Heritage Foundation will grant one-third to one-half the cost of funding the restoration only if the uses of the building can be established, Elliott assured him that people from the organization had already seen the building, heard the plans, and approved them in principle.

Although he could not state a specific time period when figures on the cost could be brought to council he pointed out that the Heritage Foundation is experienced in this work and could probably steer the Acton citizens in the appropriate action with the greatest speed.

In trying to substantiate claims that the building is worth preserving Elliott quoted from the engineer's report to council which said that "...the building is a particular-

ly fine example of the type of architecture common in southern Ontario during the late 1800s."

"...the first and second floors of the building appear visually to be good order."

"...most of the defective brickwork can be removed and replaced at crack locations."

"...there is only one crack into the foundations, which is fortunate since only a small amount of underpinning maybe necessary."

"...there are no floor deflections in either first or second floors except a small area at the rear of the stage."

"...the plaster is in quite good condition."

"...generally the wood is in very sound condition."

Both Councillors George Malby and Roy Booth were of the opinion that there was no need to rush with the demolition order. So long as work went ahead on facilities for the firefighters the Townhall was not a matter for immediate decisions.

Acton citizens deserved at least a month to look into ways of saving the building, they said.

Council's decision to wait for further meetings was unanimous.

ACTON MERCHANTS CONCERNED OVER LOITERING YOUTH

Problems caused by young people loitering on the sidewalks of downtown Acton emerged as the chief concern of the Acton Business Association at a meeting Wednesday.

The merchant's complaints about youths frightening and intimidating customers have prompted the association's clean-up and security committee to contact police about the possibility of making regular patrols downtown.

Don Lindsay, an association director, related an incident that took place a week ago, which the association agreed exemplified the problems to be confronted immediately.

Mr. Lindsay reported he notified the Acton detachment of the Halton Regional Police after customers began complaining to him about youths blocking the sidewalk in front of his Mill Street store.

The young people, he said were indiscriminately drinking beer and swearing loudly, but had dispersed by the time a constable arrived on the scene 45 minutes later.

"Last summer there were six or eight windows broken downtown," Mr. Lindsay said. "By the way things are starting this year, there could be a lot more trouble."

Although fellow merchant Mike Kinal reported that the police have started occasional patrols on foot through the downtown core, the feasibility of regularly scheduled patrols, others pointed out, remains questionable.

Paul Nielsen noted that District 1 Police Superintendent Floyd Schwartz recently told the Acton Chamber of Commerce that two more constables would have to be hired before regular patrols could begin. The cost, however, is prohibitive.

The security committee, chaired by Alma Swetman, was advised to investigate the reasons why the young people are hanging around downtown and if possible to suggest other places and activities that could draw their interest. Mr. Lindsay noted that other towns he had visited recently are kept clean of litter and similarly, the sidewalks are free of such "groups of bums."

Gray guarantees beds if petitions supported

By KAREN WARD

George Gray, chairman of the Halton board of health guaranteed if he received popular support backed by petitions, he would crack a freeze placed on nursing homes in October 1975.

Gray, guest speaker at the United Senior Citizens meeting in Stewarttown, Monday said the Georgetown hospital board has approved an addition to the hospital using hospital facilities and that hospital administrator A.E. Morris took the resolution to Halton Hills council which approved the addition unanimously.

Two weeks ago, as board of health chairman Gray presented the regional board of health with the proposal for a nursing home which was approved unanimously.

Halton Region endorsed the proposal on May 4, and "although it should be cut and dried by now", Health Minister Dennis Timbrell said the Halton district Health Council must approve the proposal, and if they do Gray then needs numerous petitions to present to the minister.

Petition sheets are available in easily accessible public places such as the Herald offices, stores in the Market Place, the Community Centre in Acton and will be distributed soon in many stores.

Fred Spires, member of the USCO has collected 127 names on his petition sheet. Anyone over 18 is eligible to sign and name, address and telephone number is required on the sheets.

"The government has placed the freeze on nursing beds in an effort to reduce health costs," Mr. Gray said. "I would not object so strongly if the northern part of Halton Hills had any beds, but we don't."

There are 657 nursing beds in the southern part of the region, but only 10 beds in Acton, which are not even being used. "Mrs. Kelly who is using the beds for a rest home facility is negotiating with Maple Villa Nursing home in the southern part of the region," he said.

"The difference in the region is discrimination and I'm going to fight it," he said. When asked if the election would hold up any plans for the nursing home, he said this was the best time to ask the cabinet minister. "Any minister I bump into I ask," he said.

A capital budget of \$14,827,896 for 1977 was also approved.

Of that total \$314,000 is for Halton Hills; \$257,597 for Milton; \$1,349,000 for Oakville; \$2,257,908 for Burlington and \$10,558,391 for the region.

The capital budget also included a five-year forecast which outlines where future capital spending is likely to occur but which may not necessarily.

All the items in the forecast are subject to cuts and the budget is characterized as "flexible". However, it forecasts spending \$66,692,617 between 1977 and 1981. Of that total \$2,105,000 would be in Halton Hills; \$2.5 million in Milton; \$6.1 million in Oakville \$14.7 million in Burlington and \$41.3 million in the region.

Esqueing is 103.05, up 11 points for 1976. On an average residential assessment of \$4,599, taxpayers will pay \$50.59 more than in 1976 or \$473.92.

Esqueing mill rate is made up of 32.21 for the town's general purpose; 60.23 for education (35.81 for elementary, 31.31 for secondary) and 10.16 for Halton's general purpose.

Besides the regular mill rate, taxpayers in the special lighting areas of Glen Williams, Norval, Stewarttown and Bollnaffad will have 2.47, 1.55, 1.01 and 1.89 respectively tacked on to their tax bill.

Commercial-industrial 1 taxpayers in those four areas will have 2.91, 1.82, 1.19 and 2.22 extra on their tax bills respectively.

The commercial-industrial mill rate is Esqueing is 117.3. For that portion of north Oakville in Halton Hills, the residential mill rate in 1977 is 88.46, an increase of 8.31 points over 1976. For an average residential assessment of \$5,531, taxpayers will get a bill for \$489.26, up \$45.95 over 1976. The Oakville mill rate

Breaking down the Acton mill rate, there is 34.56 to the town for general purposes; \$3.38 for special area charges; 62.06 for education (33 for elementary, 29.06 for secondary); 12.62 to Halton for general purposes and 10.2 for sewers.

Acton's industrial-commercial mill rate is 142.96. The residential mill rate in

Region mill rate up 21 per cent

A 21 per cent increase in the regional tax levy will increase the mill rate taxpayers in Halton Hills face this year.

At a meeting Thursday that was to cut but actually added dollars, regional councillors voted 12 to 9 to accept a \$33,917,440 operating budget.

Of that total, \$14,680,704 is to be raised from the municipalities.

The regional portion of the 1977 mill rate in rural Acton is 12.62; 10.61 in rural Esqueing; 10.07 in rural Georgetown; 12.34 in urban Georgetown; 22.82 in urban Acton and 10.16 in rural Oakville.

Halton Hill's portion of the \$14,680,704 the region needs to raise is \$1,209,376. Milton's is \$1,118,095; Oakville's is \$5,104,447 and Burlington's is \$7,018,776.

The stormy meeting was marked by personal attacks of councillors on each other.

One of the most unruly of the councillors was public works chairman Jack Raftis. Yet his behavior may have paid off for despite complaints to the chairman Mayor Mary Munro and Harry Barrett and Councillor Carl Eriksen, Mr. Raftis managed to regain two of four staff positions for his department that were cut at an earlier meeting.

Council defeated a motion by Mr. Eriksen that would have sent the budget back to com-

mittees for a further eight or nine per cent cut to reduce the increase to 12 per cent from 21 per cent. He was supported by Mayor Harry Barrett. It is not responsible government to have a 21 per cent increase when the local increases are kept to seven per cent, Mr. Eriksen said.

Council also rejected an administration committee recommendation that would

Halton Hills council has to officially pass a bylaw to approve new tax rates but treasurer Ray King gave finance administration committee a preview Monday.

For Georgetown, \$3.85 is the residential mill rate. On an average residential assessment of \$5,590, a taxpayer's bill will be \$524.62. That's up \$25.10 from 1976 when the mill rate was five per cent lower at 89.36 and the tax was \$499.52.

The Georgetown mill rate comprises 27.66 for town purposes; 4.29 for special area charges, such as crossing guards, garbage collection and street lighting; 49.56 for education (26.37 for elementary, 23.19 for secondary); 10.07 for Halton purposes and

2.27 for sewers.

The commercial-industrial mill rate in Georgetown is 103.05.

For Acton, 124.92 is the residential mill rate. On an average residential assessment of \$4,466, the 1977 taxpayer will have to fork over \$31.26 more than in 1976, or a total of \$557.12, a 5.9 per cent increase.

Breaking down the Acton mill rate, there is 34.56 to the town for general purposes; \$3.38 for special area charges; 62.06 for education (33 for elementary, 29.06 for secondary); 12.62 to Halton for general purposes and 10.2 for sewers.

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COLD READING

There was plenty to read at the Georgetown University Women's Club used book sale Saturday at Georgetown Market Place. However, a stiff breeze and cool temperatures made browsing less than pleasant and tending the counters a fight against frostbite. Pictured above wearing gloves is Karen Morris getting ready to sort through a stack of books.

Core program is defined

Halton Board of Education did its work of approving a previous meeting's minutes in a 60 second procedure before getting to the heart of Thursday's meeting—an examination of core curriculum in the region's elementary schools.

As the meeting was on the first Thursday of the month, a day trustees usually have off, and the caretakers have the board's offices to themselves, some of the trustees wandered in late and others didn't quite make it at all.

Bruce Mather, superintendent of program, and Grant Hutchings, principal of Pineview School, presented to trustees, about 10 persons in the audience and four reporters a definition of core curriculum and how it works in Halton's schools.

Mr. Mather said "core" has two definitions—the board's and the Ministry of Education's. "Core" is the skills and knowledge within every subject that are essential, while the ministry defines it as a group of mandatory subjects in grades nine and ten. However, the ministry sets across the board policies which are flexible and contain the responsibilities of the schools, he noted.

In Halton, where core curriculum development has been taking place since 1973, all elementary schools have core curriculum in all subjects but Health and that will come on stream in the 1977-78 school year, stated Mr. Mather.

Mr. Hutchings outlined for trustees the various steps involved in implementing a core curriculum at the classroom level and revealed some sample programs developed by classroom teachers. Strategies to test the effectiveness of implemented core curriculum are being developed, he pointed out.

Before coffee break and a final question period, trustees had time to attend any three or four seminars on the arts, health education, language arts and mathematics in rooms decorated with paintings of young Halton students. The meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.