

EMBROILED IN DISPUTE WITH TOWN

Developer's 'fireside chat' with Georgetown Jaycees

By GEORGE EVASHUK Herald staff writer

Developer Bruce McLaughlin came to Georgetown to deliver "fire and brimstone" speech but after dinner with the Georgetown Jaycees it turned into a "fireside chat."

The Jaycees fed him his choice of veal or sole, finished him ten cents for a minor infraction, then let him pull up a chair and tell them why he is embroiled in a battle with the elected representatives of Halton Hills ratepayers.

The last time he was in Georgetown at council chambers trying to speak to the planning board, he was ejected from the meeting and held a press conference in a windy, wintery parking lot.

His appearance last Tuesday was an attempt "enlist your support to reverse the decision of your planning board and council," he told the Jaycees.

His conflict with the town's representatives has become "a test of morality, logic, judgment and fair play," he said. And to see that he wins he is prepared to sue Halton Hills for "millions and millions of dollars."

"The battle will go on so long as I live," he vowed, "because I'm right and for justice."

But the real losers in the battle are the "ordinary Joe's" who can't afford housing, he said. When voters go to the polls in November they will have to ask themselves if there

is "room for their neighbours and room for their children," and "Can there be a prosperous society without growth?"

Mr. McLaughlin charged Halton Hills council and planning board as being "grossly unfair," and acting "contrary to the rule of law."

He took an opportunity to recite that credo of the Jaycee Club which states: "That government should be of laws rather than of men."

"If we lose that," he added, "we lose democracy, and we have."

The position of Halton Hills council is "contrary to their contractual obligations, to legislation in the Planning Act and the express objections of senior (Ontario) cabinet ministers," he said.

And when anti-development measures, all (such) municipalities have doubled and tripled the price of housing."

And when anti-development councils are voted out of office, "history will say (they) took away the opportunity for an ordinary Joe to own his own home."

"Anti-development councils are turning the country into paper pushers rather than producers," who are "getting out."

His company, which had assets grow from \$25 million in 1972 to \$300 million in 1975, and he himself are "in for 20 more years, but we'll get out if we have to put up with the law-

lessness of councils."

Without the co-operation of councils it is "almost impossible to achieve development," he said, and charged the provincial government with being "afraid to take away the developing authority from councils after it has been abused."

Halton Hills council "changes the rules according to their whim, a mode of behavior he described as "foul play." Developers used to say, "Let's keep a low profile and don't fight city hall," but all that is changing now, he said.

"We really don't approve one iota of what anti-development councils are doing," he said. Developers do not build just for the sake of building but to fulfill the needs of people for housing, he said. "We are first class citizens as you are."

He said the media since 1972 has become "anti-development," part of the reason why developers have such poor public image these days. "Our trademark in the development industry, is quality, and Canadian builders are among the best in the world," he said.

"Ask yourself as you go the polls: 'Where will our children live? Where will we work? And who will be able to afford anything after this inflation is over?'"

Anti-development is "a contagious disease in the community carried from council to council," he said. As far as Halton Hills council is concerned, "we're going to do our best to find out why they don't like the bill of our kill."



BRUCE McLAUGHLIN

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Mr. McLaughlin explained some aspects of the contract he has with Halton Hills which has been approved by municipal bylaw and by the province and said issues such as sewage treatment plants and highways are "red herrings," intended to "waive" the intent of honorable men.

The intent which is to build 1,800 homes on 350 acres of farmland in south Georgetown below Silver Creek and on both sides of Mountainview Road, is crystal clear, he said. "The morality of a nation is only as good as its leaders," and once a deal has been struck "they cannot back out."

"It's said that capital is a coward," Mr. McLaughlin continued, "and these men are driving it out of our country. They're saying we can't ply our trade."

Mr. McLaughlin said that in the past decades he has built two million housing units and "thousands of shopping centres," which produce \$100 million in tax revenue each year. Items such as parks, libraries and arenas, "are trinkets for what's going down the drain in lost tax revenue."

The building industry accounts for 18 per cent of the Gross National Product and is "a generator of economic well being," he said. "The economy is in trouble because of little men who don't understand the rule of law, but who do get us into a mesh of entanglements."

In a question period following the "fireside chat," Mr. McLaughlin said Halton Hills council cannot change the rule of law by taking out the benefit from a contract, then passing a retroactive law to "wipe out" the contract. That is "an act of bad faith. That's not fair play."

But councils are only the delegates of the province and the provincial Planning Act says developers have the right to apply to build housing and get a reply in 30 days, he said. Since the Act was passed, planning is being done in more depth, he said, "but not ten years." Any change in the Planning Act, however, must come "by due process of law."

He said that before 1946, land use "was as you saw fit, then came the Planning Act. Today

you apply forever. That's why the rule of law has broken down."

Asked what type of housing he wanted to build below Silver Creek, Mr. McLaughlin said single homes. "We're prepared to eliminate all apartments," there would be "moderate ranged houses... about \$50,000."

Other municipalities have allowed 30 foot lots, "but here it's primarily 50 foot, single dwelling."

Mr. McLaughlin's vice-president for Ontario, Ernest Bodnar, who has lived in Georgetown about 10 years, said the houses would be "almost identical" to those in the Delrex subdivision, which has developed by Rex Heston from whom Mr. McLaughlin purchased the contract.

Mr. Bodnar said Halton Hills council has been offered a planning study and a special levy to pay for unforeseen items. "But it is irksome to be confronted by a financial analysis by the town which lays on a level of service three times in

the Ontario Municipal Board will rule he said. (The hearings will reopen May 1 when the town's arguments will be presented). Sewage capacity is the factor which will keep the lid on Georgetown at a better 50,000 population until a better technology is developed, he said.

But there already exists, he added, an "aerobic sewage system" which could service a population of 20,000 and "where nothing goes into the stream."

In an effort to take talks going, he said he is prepared to contribute 220 acres of valley land to Halton Hills.

He said industrial development could be attracted to town by selling the land cheaply.

Mr. Bodnar said Halton Hills council has been offered a planning study and a special levy to pay for unforeseen items. "But it is irksome to be confronted by a financial analysis by the town which lays on a level of service three times in

excess of the rest of the town."

Mr. Bodnar said that without industrial development there would be a half a mill increase on the tax to ratepayers for the cost of education. The impact of industrial assessment on the tax load has diminished because of regional education and regional services.

Mr. McLaughlin also attacked a member of the working press. He accused the reporter of being "biased" and having a "closed mind." And although it was the first time either had ever seen each other, Mr. McLaughlin said, "I don't like you."

He charged the reporter with asking him "trick questions." But later, Mr. McLaughlin admitted to the reporter over a handshake that "kicking the media," is "all part of the game."

At the conclusion of his "fireside chat," Mr. McLaughlin accepted a gift of a book on the history of Georgetown, mingled with the Jaycees and posed for photos.

ON THE HOME FRONT

Dieting!

By SUSAN De FACENDIS

My husband had to perform some rather intricate gyrations recently in order to squeeze into an almost new suit. Ruelfully surveying his expanded waistline, a legacy of the holiday season, he announced he was going on a diet.

My man is not usually noted for suffering in silence and firmly believes that if he has to deny himself, so should everyone else around him. After all, where is the fun in self-sacrifice if no one knows about it?

Consequently, with his pronouncement, groans of dismay arose from the rest of us who, being somewhat on the svelte side, believe we need all the sustenance we can scrounge up at the dinner table.

Now if there is anything worse than a man on a diet, it is an Italian man on a diet, for whom food approaches a mystical experience far surpassing a mere life-support measure. I could not help but wonder just how this incredible shrinking man act would be accomplished.

Knowing him well and realizing that his agony would be difficult if not well-nigh impossible to bear, we decided to make things as easy as possible for him and pizza, pasta and bread were forthwith banned from the house.

Admittedly we did attempt to put up a bold front at the dinner table. We tried sparkling conversation as a food substitute and Teresa even managed to keep her elbows off the table as a diversion. However, with his soulful eyes watching every morsel of food leaving our plates, the gull trip simply proved to be just too much for us to take.

Our meagre evening meal being rapidly cleared away with hardly a gungey saucer in sight, after all, how many pots does it take to prepare celery stalks, we waited in ill-concealed impatience for the man of the house to carry his fast-weakened body down the television set.

Three starving children and their mother immediately degenerated into "closet snackers."

Barley giving father time to totter shakily down the stairs, silent in-fighting at the door of the refrigerator began and massive platefuls of crackers and cheese, peanut butter sandwiches, and bowls of cereal were hurriedly distributed. Fleet-footed children dispersed with their secret horde of goodies to the bedrooms, while I hid under the kitchen table clutching a precious, energy sustaining slice of salami - and this (grown) was only the first day.

How long, the cry went up, would it be before Dad's waistline returned to normal and we could all eat openly and honestly again at the table?

Naturally it was not too long. Two hours after dinner, if such a poor repast could be so dignified by the term, the first complaints of weakness and dizziness plaintively floated up from the nether regions of the recreation room.

While to my critical eye he did not appear exactly "waisted" I have to admit he gave the bulge a good try. And, as I tried to reassure him, if Burt Reynolds' chest ever slips to half-mast, why, no one will ever be able to tell them apart.

Limehouse news

Mrs. A. W. BENTON Herald correspondent

The W. I. met at the home of Mrs. Anderson on Thursday evening.

The president Mrs. Booth read a short item and the Ode and Collect were repeated in unison.

Notes of thanks were received from a number who had received gifts at Christmas, and thank you from the Sick Children's Hospital Foundation for a donation.

Mrs. Kirkwood accepted an appointment as delegate to the Officers' Conference at Waterloo University May 2 to 4.

Bring a craft and explain it, the roll call, brought samples of needlepoint, macrame, tatting, hooked rugs, rick rack flowers, even a chair with a needlepoint seat. Convenors read short reports and Mrs. Devereaux read current events.

Mrs. Benton introduced crafts woman, Mrs. Roger Beck, who showed samples of wool from the fleece to yard, to knitted and woven articles. She demonstrated cradling, drop spindle and spinning by wheel.

She had yarns from various animals, and even human hair. Mrs. Booth thanked the speaker and extended courtesies. Mrs. Anderson and

Mrs. Davies served a nice lunch after.

Mrs. Kirkpatrick has returned from a couple of months with her daughter, Mrs. John Foster at Head Lake near Kirkfield.

We don't like to hear of homes burning anytime, but in winter it seems much worse. We are sorry to hear that Mr. Louth lost his cottage on the 4th line by fire late Saturday night.

By MRS. G. DENNY BROWNIES After a month of cancellations the Brownies had their first meeting of the new year on Feb. 1. At the meeting the girls planned their project for the upcoming Thinking Day. Future trips and events were also discussed. January's sleep-over at Brown Owl's (Marni Wilsie) was set for another date in February.

GUIDES The Guides also had many cancellations in the month of January due to bad weather conditions. We did however manage to go on a swimming outing to the Acton Lions Pool on Jan. 31. After swimming we enjoyed drinks and pizza at the Olympia drive-in restaurant. It was a super fantastic trip and I must praise the girls for their excellent behaviour. We were very proud of them all.

Ballinafad district news

By WINIFRED SMITH Herald correspondent

The February meeting of the W.I. was held at the home of Mrs. Rita Shortill.

Mrs. Jamieson, as president, opened the meeting by reading a few words of wisdom followed by all repeating the W.I. Creed and Ode.

Fourteen members and one visitor answered the roll call by naming a Shakespearean play and quoting a few lines from it.

Mrs. Ada Kirkwood was appointed the delegate to attend the officers' conference in May.

Mrs. Shortill, as convenor for education and cultural activities then took over the meeting and called on Mrs. Smith for the motto which was, "The Heart is Her Child's Schoolroom."

Mrs. Given gave current events. There were some interesting reports given by the standing committee convenors. Mrs. Grace McEnery gave an interesting reading taken from a teachers' publication.

The program ended with Mrs. Shortill showing illustrations of beautiful paintings by the artist Ken Danby.

It was voted to have coffee and dessert before the March meeting begins instead of the usual afternoon tea.

Mrs. Viola Shortill and Mrs. Slessoraitis assisted the hostesses with the serving of a dainty lunch.

Every one will be glad once again to receive their copy of the newsletter put out by the Community Centre.

Congratulations to the new editor Sandra Henderson for an informative piece of read-

ing. There are extra copies left at the store for those who didn't receive one. The newsletter was developed to keep the community informed of the upcoming dances, also included a variety of activities.

The "Sweatheart" Dance will be Feb. 18 and you are asked to bring along your favorite casserole for a pot luck supper. Tickets are available at the store.

Due to the efforts of Mr. Ivan Bird the 10c movie will be shown again. On Feb. 24 through the cooperation of the library the first of a series of short features will be shown.

The movie will begin at 7:30, so kids, save your allowance and bring along Mom and Dad and make it a family night. When was the last time you went to a movie for 10 cents?

Susan O'Connor who recently flew up from Brownies to 2nd Acton Guides spent the weekend camping at Clifford with other members of the Acton Guides.

Gregory Snow, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bud Snow is spending some time visiting his sisters in Edmonton, Alberta. He arrived just in time to see the older sister Louise, before she, with her husband and family made the move to B.C. where they will be living.

Some interesting news was brought to our attention last week when we heard that Stephen Garton, a student of Pembroke High School was the best in the physical fitness program of the whole of Canada.

Stephen who is 17 is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Garton of Pembroke and a grandson of Mrs. Arlene McEnery who is a resident here, his mother being Yvonne McEnery before marriage. Congratulations.

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Council rejects advance

Halton Hills council overruled a recommendation Monday which would have given members of the press a copy of council agendas the Monday morning of the council or committee meetings.

The motion was lost on a tie vote which councillor Walter Biehn, chairman of committee of the whole decided by his nay vote.

Councillor Biehn is a former newspaper man who was editor and publisher of The Herald for about 30 years.

Coun. Roy Booth said if copies of the agendas are given to the press, they also have to be given to everybody. By withholding the agendas until the meeting time, staff would be free of a "bombardment of questions all day."

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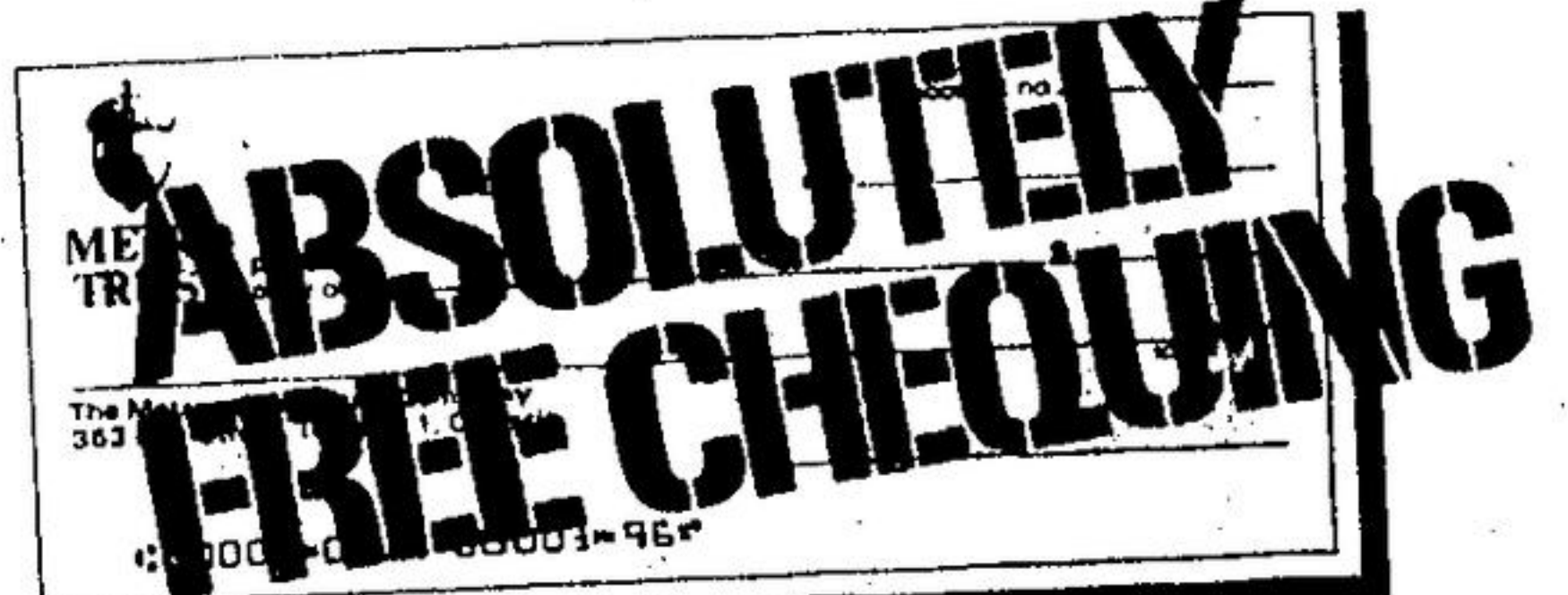
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