

Pleasant or Spiling? Sometimes it's hard to tell whether a man is trying to be successful in order to please his wife or to spite his mother-in-law.

The full-size paper reaching more than 13,000 homes in Halton Hills

Rally planned for NEC plan opponents

By BOB RUTTER Herald staff writer The possibility exists of organized opposition in Halton Hills toward the implementation of preliminary planning proposals for the Niagara Escarpment.

Several area landowners attended a meeting of the Niagara Escarpment Central Ratepayers Association (NECRA) Thursday to learn what efforts have been taken by landowners north of Halton Hills through Dufferin, Simcoe, Grey and Bruce Counties.

He also cited loss of legacy and elimination of retirement income from land as reasons why area residents may wish to attend.

NECRA has been in the forefront of organized opposition toward the planning proposals. President George Shepherd, of Shelburne, addressed more than 750 people at an NEC meeting in Warton, in March calling the planning proposals "the great landgrab," a term used by MPP Eddie Sargent during debate in the legislature on the NEC Act.

NECRA sees the plan, proposed following almost five years of study, as resulting in a basic erosion of basic landowners rights.

Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed recently met with escarpment landowners in the Terra Cotta area to help in protecting their interests.

Opponents of the NEC plan are protesting the right to expropriate in the strongest possible terms, he said.

Grey Liberal MPP Bob McKessock has thrown legislative support behind opponents of the NEC plan by introducing a private member's bill to be heard May 11 calling for the NEC planning area to be reduced in size to encompass only the escarp and escarp protection areas.

The bill, which by tradition has very little hope of being sent to committee, also would require the NEC to become subject to Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) appeal and allow all present developable lots along the escarpment, outside of the protective area, the right to development permits.

He said a local group may form following a rally planned by NECRA in Orangeville May 3. Billed as a chance to stop the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) the rally is expected to have busloads of residents attend from along the entire 450-mile long escarpment planning area.

NECRA is also recommending a return to local municipalities of planning control to ensure local needs and province-wide recreational needs.

Interim chairman Art Rice says the meeting is open to anyone who lives in the Cheltenham, Terra Cotta, Halton Hills and Inglewood areas, and who believes his land has been devalued by the proposed NEC plan.

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NEC replies:

Didn't exceed limit, not undemocratic

The Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) has not exceeded its authority, nor has it attempted to impose undemocratic controls on landowners, commission chairman J. Ivor McMullin says.

"One might reasonably expect that during the normal course of development of the NEC plan most, if not all, property owners will become aware of their positions in the planning area."

He reiterated the position of the NEC that no acquisition of lands for the Bruce Trail take place without consent from landowners.

A spokesman within the commission explained that the feeling is that the trail should be stabilized "by any reasonable way and if a handshake is satisfactory that's fine."

He stressed that the NEC proposals only note an optimum route along the escarpment.

"It was the appreciation in 1973 that a consistent, orderly plan for the Niagara Escarpment could not be evolved by leaving it up to the many municipalities in the planning area," Mr. McMullin said.

"A number of these municipalities still have no local municipal plans, although considerable progress has been made in municipal planning in the escarpment area in the last three or four years."

Mr. McMullin stressed that the NEC planning act contains "a number of provisions to ensure fair play and natural justice" for landowners.

"In the preparation of the NEC plan there are a number of steps that are required by the act to ensure fair play and the exercise of natural justice," he said.

The preliminary proposals released by the commission in February represent "an extra step, not even required by the act, to seek public and municipal input before a proposed plan is produced."

A statutory period of formal public response will take place after the proposed plan is formulated.

Mr. McMullin says it would be difficult to inform all landowners within the NEC planning area. The area takes in 2,000 square miles of land and an estimate by one NEC spokesman revealed a cost of \$10,000 to contact owners in one county section of the planning area.

Mr. McMullin says all planning results in some form of control over land use and the NEC will be no different.

"The preliminary proposals put out by the NEC do not impose restrictions that are, on the whole, very much more severe than those that might expect to be imposed were planning conducted by the local municipality."

He said in some cases the NEC proposals are recognized as a relaxing of existing controls.

Responding directly to Niagara Escarpment Central Ratepayers Association (NECRA) President George Shepherd's charge that landowners are suffering hardships over the interim development control while the plan was developed, Mr. McMullin said:

In fact, 90 per cent of the application for development are being approved and a number of those that are not approved would unlikely have been approved by municipalities had there been no development controls.

Disapprovals result primarily from other factors such as no road frontage and health unit refusal to certify the development.

He said that under the development control process a hearing officer is appointed by the minister of housing, not the provincial secretary for resources development responsible for the NEC.

"This is set up this way to ensure an independent view of the situation."

The hearing officer assembles evidence in detail to report to the housing minister so that the minister's decision is based on all available evidence.

Mr. McMullin says this is similar to the appeals heard by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and he believes hearing officers will be members of the OMB.

He said the NEC has recommended that planning controls be returned to local municipalities except for "a narrow central area about the escarp."

He added that the Planning Act and the NEC Development Act recognize the rights of ownership consistent with the need for proper planning.



A LOOK BACK IN TIME

What's for dessert? Pupils in grades 2 and 3 at Park school in Georgetown travelled into the past last week to sample pioneer life. Their lessons that day were in the fashion of the old one-room school, which really isn't that old; and they wore costumes like the pioneers. Highlight of the day

was a pioneer meal of baked beans, brown bread and for dessert, baked apples. Looking on in anticipation are Ian Handy, 8, and Bonnie Clark, 7. More pictures and story inside.

Photo by George Evaschuk

Acton band receives \$4,860

Finance administration committee has recommended a \$4,860 grant for Acton Citizens' Band.

Committee by a 3-2 vote also recommended Monday the repeal of a 20-year-old bylaw of the former town of Acton which provided through a half-mill levy on assessment a fund for the annual maintenance of the Acton Junior High Band.

The repeal of the bylaw, if passed by council, means the band will have to apply annually for a grant to continue operating.

Bandmaster George Elliott led a delegation of seven band members dressed in their scarlet and blue uniforms to tell the committee that the 106-year-old band, believed to be the oldest continuously operating citizens' band in Ontario, could not cut \$1,500 from its budget as council had requested last week.

"The cut in grant proposed for the Acton band condemns it to a slow death and oblivion in five years time," Mr. Elliott said. The amount requested is the minimum required to keep the band operating and in support of his contention, Mr. Elliott cited a number of points.

The band has its own practice hall built and maintained by the band, he said. As well, the band last year raised \$1,065 on its own and with a matching grant from Wintario purchased two new instruments.

He said the band also raises the money it needs for transportation around Acton to sing Christmas carols, to sing for the residents of Halton Centennial Manor in Milton and to enter the Canadian National Exhibition band competition.

Mr. Elliott explained how the structure of the band differs from the Georgetown Girls' Pipe Band and the now defunct Georgetown Citizens' Band.

and an opportunity to participate in a type of cultural activity which no other municipally supported group does," he said. "Adults in particular benefit from participation because usually they are asked to pay taxes which

only support activities almost exclusively restricted to young people.

There is some confusion at this time of year between leachate and surface water runoff, says Donald Morrier, manager of operations and maintenance of Halton region.

Mr. Morrier was commenting on reports that leachate is running off the landfill site on Armstrong Avenue in Georgetown into the Credit River.

"There is some," Mr. Morrier told The Herald. "But we are in the process of extending the leachate collection system."

Once completed the system will take all the leachate, he said. "In fact at this point of time, it only pumps a small amount because of a lack of quantity."

Leachate is usually generated below the surface and in some cases breaks out of the side and involves storm water run off, Mr. Morrier said.

Earlier there was a problem with slope failure and the leachate collection system had to be redesigned. "At a very rough guess," the system will be finished before June.

Leachate is usually generated below the surface and in some cases breaks out of the side and involves storm water run off, Mr. Morrier said.

As soon as we find it, we take steps to prevent it from going into the river."

Besides the extension of the collection system, the region is using a clay sealer at points where the leachate leaks, he said.

"Even though there is leachate going in, and we aren't condoning it," Mr. Morrier said, "we are taking all steps to stop the leachate."

The ministry of environment has been taking water samples for testing for the past five years. Samples have been taken a few feet downstream of the site and the leachate is "undetectable."

The ministry of environment has been aware of this problem, a spokesman said Monday.

Leachate has been a problem for a number of years at the landfill site, said Ken Hogg, "but you need to keep in mind the magnitude."

Mr. Hogg said the Credit River is monitored periodically and ministry officials have met with Halton region to correct the problem.

The major volume of effluent leaving the site is storm run off," he said. "It's basically storm water."

He said the technical support section of the ministry will be taking water samples from the Credit River after the leachate collection system is completed to see if there is a reduced impact on the river.

Students were kept out of the building for the early part of Monday morning until the obscenities were cleaned up, but classes were back to normal by morning recess.

Police are still investigating.

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Region fixing collection system after leachate reported in river

Police investigating vandals attacking Harrison school

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About The Hills School purchase? Reset clocks Students donate Focal hearing Nov. 6 Wins at science fair Litter gitter