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Home Newspaper of Halton Hills

THIRTY-TWO PAGES

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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 Es-

carpment. Several area landowners attended a meeting of the Ningara 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.

"We went up there more as observers and just to see what was happening there," Georgetown lawyer and . resident Bill Mander-

son sald. 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. Meanwhile The Herald has Rights Association in the Nialearned that the Concerned Citizens of Terra Cotta will be abolish the Niagara Escarpholding a meeting with the ment Commission, the propos-Niagara Escarpment Commis- ed NEC plan and the legislatsion at Creditview school May

Interim chairman Art Rice tenham, Terra Cotta, Halton Hills and Inglewood areas, and who believes his land has been devalued by the proposed NEC

NEC replies:

The Niagara Escarpment

Commission (NEC) has not ex

-ceeded its authority, nor has it

attempted to impose undemo-

cratic controls on landowners,

commission chairman J. Ivor

"The preliminary proposals

of the commission are just that

- preliminary - they have

been put out for public discus-

sion to help in producing a land

use plan," Mr. McMullin says.

The legislation under which

the commission was formed

was approved by a "democrat-

ically elected legislature," he

said, "It includes in it opport-

unities for public input to the

planning process that exceed

those which apply to even local

He reiterated the position of

the NEC that no acquisition of

lands for the Bruce Trail take

place without consent from

A spokesman within the

commission explained that the

feeling is that the trail should

be stabilized "by any reason-

able way and if a handshake is

He said about 33 per cent of

the present trail is now in

public ownership and regard-

ing the acquisition of addition-

al lands it is "the NEC thought

that over the years this could

He stressed that the NEC

proposals only note an opti-

mum route along the escarp-

"It was the appreciation in

1973 that a consistent, orderly

plan for the Ningara Escarp-

ment could not be evolved by

leaving it up to the many

municipalities in the planning

"A number of these munici-

palities still have no local

municipal plans, although con-

siderable progress has been

made in municipal planning in

the escarpment area in the last

Mr. McMullin stressed that

the NEC planning act contains

"a number of provisions to

ensure fair play and natural

"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 just-

The preliminary proposals

released by the commission in

February represent "an extra

step, not even required by the

act, to seek public and munic-

ipal input before a proposed

A statutory period of formal

public response will take place

after the proposed plan is

three or four years."

fustice" for landowners.

ice," he said.

plan is produced."

area," Mr. McMullin said.

satisfactory that's fine."

become public lands."

McMullin says.

official plans,'

landowners.

He also cited loss of legacy and elimination of retirement income from land as reasons why area residents may wish, should completely abandon the 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 Wiarton, in March calling the planning proposals "the great landgrab," a term used by MPP Eddie Sargent during debate in the legislature on the NEC

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

"In normal and just society the NEC has exceeded limits of authority in attempting to impose undemocratic controls," the association states in a prepared statement.

NECRA in consort with a northern ratepayers association in Bruce and Grey Counties, and the Property Owner's gara peninsula, is seeking to ion which created the commis-

NECRA is also recommendsays the meeting is open to ingarcturn to local municipalanyone who lives in the Chel- ities of planning control to ensure local needs and province-wide recreational needs. Sections of the Bruce Trail through Bruce County, Halton Hills and the Niagara penins-

"One might reasonably exp-

ect 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

He takes the position that

preparation of the plan will not

have a "detrimental effect on

property values in the escarp-

"Rather, it is suggested that

the opposite is true. That property values will be enhanced."

he said, "True there will be

some developers who will be

disappointed, however, this

Mr. McMullin says all plan-

ning results in some form of

control over land use and the

"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 loc-

owners are suffering hards-

hips over the interim develop-

ment control while the plan was developed, Mr. McMullin

al municipality."

ment controls."

the situation."

central area about the scarp."

Act and the NEC Development

Act recognize the rights of

ownership consistent with the

need for proper planning.

He added that the Planning

was to be expected." ...

NEC will be no different.

ment planning area.

planning area.

Didn't exceed limit,

not undemocratic

ula have been closed by land-

owners opposed to the plan. "The Ontario government concept of a continuous corridor from Niagara to Tober-

mory," NECRA believes. They should acquire lands wherein only substantial blocks of rough areas can be assembled into parks to satisfy all types of recreation compatlble with a given area."

At no time, the brief addressed to the commission and the Ontario government states, should Ontario or the NEC "consider acquiring a trail or corridor through private lands on behalf of or in consort with any group or association."

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, "I felt it was akin to the final

insult to the landowners who by their own generosity had maintained handshake agreements to allow the Bruce Trail to pass through their land and now stand to have that property confiscated because of their generosity." Mr. Reed said he's sympath-

areas elic toward landowners being found in this situation. He

agrees with the NECRA view that a "clear cut statement of

ownership of land," is needed. Should approval be granted for expropriation of property along the trail, "landowners will be left with nothing more than the right to be sued and pay taxes."

Grey Liberal MPP Bob Mc-Kessock 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 scarp and scarp protection

The bill, which by tradition inlent," Both the NEC plan has very little hope of being and the draft plan for the

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,

The development right would only extend to those properties existing on Feb. 14. 1978, unless the government within one year gave notice of purchase at a fair market

outside of the protective area,

the right to development per-

Mr. Reed said ownership control overland has diminished "not by legislation but

parkway belt are examples of this planning by intent.

He said an attempt is now being made by Ontario Hydro to expropriate land in the parkway belt near Milton at less than fair market value. and similarly conservation authorities have told owners that lands designated within the NEC area can't be used for development.

He said people living outside these areas should also be concerned because "they may become subject to the same kind of approach in future if the government gels away with it.

Mr. Shepherd says: "The public should be informed that

ning and Development Act is a clear illustration of the Ontario government's denial of fair play and natural justice to the landowners affected by the

He says the government was

the Niagara Escarpment Plan-

told in 1973 before the Act was passed that it "was a dangerous erosion of individual rights and liberties, but the minister replied that it was too late to amend." "Since there have been no adds.

remedial amendments since passage, the public can assume that the government intends to deny fair play to landowners.

Ontario treasurer John White. who introduced the legislation as saying: "Some people asked why the province will not acquire the entire escarpment. billion."

Mr. White also stated: "We sion. have chosen an alternative system featuring strong land use regulations plus public ownership where necessary." Mr. Shepherd charges that

the NEC legislation "accomplopritation; the government

. Final decision of hearing review is conducted by a cab- several closings resulted, decisions made following consultation with staff is a "denial of the first rule of natural tribunal shall be without bias."

ter in this case would seek the he said. advice of those who studied affected - an area often refer- commission." red to as a 'backroom'."

evidence, he says.

an ecological frill," Mr. Shep- said. herd said, "It has evolved tecting land."

must bear the cost, he says.

must be protected, then the has three goals:

the Bruce Trail Association,

said in the association spring newsletter that the NEC had done an "excellent job" on the Bruce Trail section of the proposals. "It's recommendations in-

clude provision of a footpath and trailway along an optimum route which has been identified, public access in perpetuity, provision for campsites and parking areas, regulation in heavily used areas and maintenance," he

"Gradual acquisition of the entire trailway is proposed, as is legislation limiting walking, skiing and snowshoeing, allowing campsites only at designated campsites and except at supervised campsites, making use of portable stoves

He says the trail association has a three-member commitwill be made to the commis-

Mr. Lowes area club presiishes the same result as expr- dents have been asked to comment and a clearer picture has control over the use of should be known when all

He said individual contact by and produced these programs. Bruce Trail members with in the first place, and these many owners showed "most discussions will take place not signed it as a protest rather at an open hearing as required than because of the trail; as by natural justice, but in an some sort of hammer against area not accessible to citizens the (Niagara Escarpment)

Mr. Lowes, also one of eight

roads. "If this new public "in bed with the commission." interest is so important that it The Bruce Trail Association

for the protection of any public -- to develop a walking route along the escarpment; George Roberts, president of -- and to promote outdoor ed-

ucation among Canadians.

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 Evashuk

Acton band receives \$4,860

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

He said in some cases the Committee by a 3-2 vote also NEC proposals are recognized recommended Monday the as a relaxing of existing contrepeal of a 20-year-old bylaw of the former town of Acton Responding directly to Niawhich provided through a halfgara Escarpment Central Ratepayers Association (NECRA) President George Shepherd's charge that land-

> The repeal of the bylaw, if operating.

"In fact, 90 per cent of the Bandmaster George Elliott 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 developthe oldest continously Disapprovals result primarily from other factors such as from its budget as council had no road frontage and health requested last week.

unit refusal to certify the "The cut in grant proposed development He said that under the develto a slow death and oblivision opment control process a hearin five years time," Mr. Elliott ing officer is appointed by the said. The amount requested is minister of housing, not the the minimum required to keep provincial secretary for resouthe band operating and in rces development responsible support of his contention, Mr. for the NEC. Elliott cited a number of "This is set up this way to

ensure an independent view of The band has its own practice hall built and The hearing officer assembmaintained by the band, he les evidence in detail to report said. As well, the band last to the housing minister so that year raised \$1,085 on its own the minister's decision is basand with a matching grant ed on all available evidence. from Wintario purchased two Mr. McMullin says this is new instruments.

similar to the appeals heard by He said the band also raises the Ontario Municipal Board the money it needs for tran-(OMB) and he believes hearsportation around Acton to ing officers will be members of sing Christmas carols, to sing for the residents of Halton He said the NEC has recom-Centennial Manor in Milton mended that planning controls and to enter the Canadian be returned to local municipal-National Exhibition band ities except for "a narrow

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

He said the practice hall is and an opportunity to parused by 14 local groups for social events which they couldn't afford if it wasn't for the presence of the hall. Last year the hall rentals turned a

"The band offers instruction are asked to pay taxes which

ticipate in a type of cultural activity which no other municipally supported group does," he said "Adults in particular benefit from parherpation because usually they "Band instruction and the

opportunity to play are offered free of charge to all comers regardless of personal financial position; men, eelebrations.

only support activities almost women, boys, girls whole exclusively restricted to young families all can and do par-

> In concluding Mr. Elliott pointed out that the band plays for free at civic events and

mill levy on assessment a fund for the annual maintenance of the Acton Citizens' Band and C passed by council, means the band will have to apply annually for a grant to continue after leachate reported in river

There is some confusion at the leachate collection sysled a delegation of seven band this time of year between members dressed in their teachate and surface water scarlet and blue uniforms to runoff, says Donald Morrier, tell the committee that the 106- manager of operations and year-old band, believed to be maintenance of Halton region. Mr. Morrier was commentoperating citizens' band in ing on reports that leachate is

Ontario, could not cut \$1,500 running off the landfill site on Armstrong Avenue in Georgetown into the Credit River. "There is some," Mr. Morfor the Acton band condemns it rier told The Herald. "But we are in the process of extending

The extension is on the south -east side of the site parallel to the CNR tracks and is the second phase of the collection

system, he 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.

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 generat-

ed below the surface and in

some cases breaks out of the side and involves storm water run off, Mr. Morrier sald. take steps to prevent it from

"As soon as we find it, we going into the river."

Police investigating vandals attacking Harrison school

at Harrison school which occurred overnight Sunday and resulted in considerable mess but only minor damage to the

Vandals stole some money, ransucked desk drawers, poured flourescent correcting liquld on a desk and public address system, and threw black stencil ink about the school office.

They also took fruit juice from the refrigerator in the staff lounge and splashed it about the room and painted obscenities on chalk boards and floors. Entry was gained by break-

Halton Regional police were ing a window which had alcalled to investigate a break in ready been broken and temporarily boarded up in one of the classrooms, police say.

> Halton board of education plant operations supervisor for the north area Art Burrill says cleaning up the damage cost very little since only one person was called in on overtime and other caretakers were used who normally would be working during the day.

Mr. Burrill finds the type of damage done to be more disturbing than the amount of it and warns that Harrison is one of the schools which will be "bugged" this year.

A signalling device touches

off an alarm at a central point which results in the police being sent to the school and the culprits are "usually caught red-handed before they have time to do much domage," Mr.

Halton has already installed the system which notifies authorities of burglary, heat loss or fire in 63 of its schools and Harrison will be added to the list probably by September. Students were kept out of the

Burrills says.

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.

Besides the extension of the collection system, the region is using a clay sealer at points where the leachate leaks, he "Even though there is leac-

hate going in, and we aren't condoning it," Mr. Morrier said, "we are taking all steps to stop the leachate. He said the region and the

ministry of environment have 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 "undetect-

The ministry of environment has been aware of this problem, a spokesman said Mon-

Leachate has been a prob-

lem for a number of years at the landfill site, said Ken Hogg, "but you need to keep in mind the magnitude." Mr. Hogg sald the Credit River is monitored periodical

ly and ministry officials have met with Halton region to correct the problem "The major volume of effl tient 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

impact on the river.

to see if there is a reduced

Mr. Shepherd quotes former

mandatory. Such an acquisition would tee investigating the proposals mean owning 1,3 million acres released in the preliminary at a cost of more than \$3 NEC plan and a submission

Association secretary Ray that will be far less expensive. Lowes, of Hamilton, said the while accomplishing all the association has been receiving objectives that ownership access refusals from a number would accomplish. What we of small landowners in the have designed is a planning Niagara peninsula and near Singhampton but he denied that these closings of sections of the trail route are significantly large.

member clubs respond.

In the Grimsby area where inet minister, but Mr. Shep- many of the landowners subherd questions whether such mitted similar forms withdrawing permission for access across private property.

'It was obvious that these justice which stipulates that a people had been asked at some meeting to sign these because "We all know that the minis- they were on the same form,"

"We are doing our best to This denies the citizen the plead with owners not to turn right to have the person mak- off the Bruce Trail because it ing the decision to hear the will be a disservice to the thousands of Canadians that "Public interest has become need the trail to keep sane," he

from protecting people to pro- citizen members of the commission and an individual in-While the province may bel- strumental in the establishieve it is too expensive to ment of the trail, said he hopes acquire land, the landowner owners, "won't be sucked inand use the trails as a wea-Governments now pay com- pon.". He emphasizes that the pensation for lands used for Bruce Trail Association is not

government should be requir- -to draw attention to the unied to pay for it just as it pays que feature of the escarpment

About The Hills

School purchase? Halton Hills will ask Halton board of education it the

town can purchase the Chapel Street school property. The board had originally offered the site to the town but the offer was turned down. A portion of the site was sold to St. John's United Church for use as a parking lot. Reset clocks Daylight saving time begins this Sunday. Clocks

move ahead an hour at 2 a.m. We won't eatch up on that missing hour of sleep until October.

Students donate Centennial middle school student council presented cheques last week to four charities as a result of the success of the skale-a-thon in February. Muscular Dystrophy Association of Canada received \$700, The Georgetown YM-YWCA \$500, the Canadian Cancer Society \$400, and Red Cross Youth \$300. The students raised \$6,100 during the event. The remainder of the funds will be used for school

uniforms and student activities. Focal hearing Nov. 6

Nov. 6 has been set as the date for resumption of Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearings into the matter between Halton Hills and Focal Properties Ltd. The hearings were adjourned last November after Focal Properties Ltd., a subsidiary of S.B. McLaughlin Associates, presented its arguments on why it should be allowed to proceed with construction of 1,840 homes south of Silver Creek. When the hearings resume, the town will present its side of the argument.

Wins at science fair

Georgetown district high school student Mark Robinson came in second at the Hamilton and District Science Fair with a computer project. The computer, which used a video monitor, was used to plot the course, velocity, and rate of acceleration of a ball dropped from a specified height and produced a teletype print-out which showed all the information on the screen in the form of a graph. Mark is also entered in the upcoming Ontario Science Fair in Sudbury.

Litter gitter

At 10 a.m. Saturday Brownies and Guides from the Halton region will begin a Litter Gitter blitz in Acton. Georgetown, Glen Williams, Limehouse, Milton and Norval. McDonald's Restaurants in Georgetown and Milton will be awarding hamburger and soft drink coupons to the group which collects the most litter.

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.