

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What next for Georgetown library?

(This letter sent to The Herald for publication.)

An open letter to Georgetown library patrons

On May 31, Hilton Hills Library Board agreed to hand back to town council the two-acre land deed for Cedarvale.

The obvious question is: what comes next? Logically, the library board and the council will now start pulling in tandem to pave the way for a new library with more room for more books, right?

Wrong! For instance, the town's representative on the library board, Councillor Walter Biehn, predicted council will reject the Board's request for another building site (Toronto Star, June 1). Additionally, to help ensure its defeat in council, Mr. Biehn went on record as saying he personally will vote against it!

Confused by this positive example of negative thinking? Do his words represent council's attitude? Or is he-as the NHL coaches allegedly did to referees during the Stanley Cup finals-trying to influence council to call the game in his favor?

Let's assume we all agree on one basic fact: the library is a necessary resource but

we fully inadequate physically.

Then what is the next step? Renovating and enlarging the Church Street building, you say? Tell me, where will the money for this work come from? My tax dollars, you say? Alright, since it's my money being spent, can you tell what sort of guarantees there are that more work won't soon follow? What's that you say? There aren't any guarantees on such an old building? Furthermore, when those tax dollars have gone with the wind, you'll be faced with blowing more money?

The hell, say I! Why should my tax dollars be wasted on a lost cause? What's been going on since Cedarvale became a dead issue? A new library is inevitable. Why isn't the land for it being picked out now? Why procrastinate further and add to the cost? Why waste tax money like this? When will some positive action be taken? Why is it anything that's done takes on such a negative appearance?

If the aim is to preserve the Church Street building as a landmark, that's great! Let's turn it over to the historic society who so recently put the library at the top of their "must-save" list. Naturally, this means doing so before a

new, modern superstructure is added. After all, unless the addition to the library is done from the same stone as the original walls, the building loses its all-important historic significance. If they want it preserved, their need is immediate!

The library as a resource centre is also an immediate and current need. This is especially important to someone like me I do a lot of research and have been known

to put the library's resourcefulness to the test. Last December, for example, I sought some very specific information on photogrammetry. When I failed to find what I needed on the shelves, I requested books on loan from larger libraries within the same system--the "interloan" system.

The first of the seven books I asked for arrived in February, but it wasn't until the end of May that the last one came in.

Ironically, it was this last book--a not even new 1974 edition--that was by far the most beneficial to me. This time, I was lucky, for happily there was no screaming urgency for the information. But what about next time? A library is useless when the books on the shelf are as outdated and inadequate as the overcrowded building that houses them. Why should I and others like me have to drive to Toronto or Hamilton for

research material? And what about students who aren't able to find data they need for school projects? Sounds silly, doesn't it? Yet these are but a few examples.

If I feel that way, where was I when heads were being counted in favor of the new library? Like the rest of my pro-library friends, I sat home and expected the board to do battle on my behalf. What the heck, wasn't the Board on the right side and didn't the good guys always win?

Unfortunately, that only happens in movies, and this is real life. In actual fact, the library needs the help and support of its patrons. Stand up and be counted! Speak out! Call your councillor. If you don't know who that is, call the Municipal Offices (877-5185) and tell them you're in favor of a new library.

Make your voice heard! And don't wait for summer--do it NOW!

Carol Lowe.



CANDYSTRIPER AWARDS

Georgetown candystripers received awards Wednesday evening at the annual awards night held at Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital cafeteria. Those receiving awards were standing from the left: Heather Lindsay, a special scholarship to a girl entering some field of medicine; Patti McKee service and assistance award, and Sharon Barton, the award of excellence. Becky Reid, (front) received the award of progress. Heather has a total of 1,120 hours of candystripping at the hospital. Both she and Sharon are entering nursing training in September.

Hilton Falls dam seeping water

Engineers are studying the causes of seepage at the base of the dam at Hilton Falls, north of Highway 401 and above Kelso Conservation area.

The seepage was discovered Thursday at the base of the earthen dam which is 705 feet (214.3 m) long and 50 feet (15.2 m) high. Bill Warwick, director of conservation services for Hilton Region Conservation Area (HRCA) said Monday that af-

ter the seepage was discovered it was decided to decrease the volume of water behind the dam, which holds back 299 million gallons. The reservoir behind the dam is now one-third full.

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NEC plan is unparalleled

To the editor of The Herald: I am writing in reply to Mr. Ted Von Zuben's letter published in the May 24 Herald. Referring to comments I made in favour of the NEC at their Terra Cotta presentation, Mr. Von Zuben asks how I would feel to be scheduled for acquisition.

It may come as a surprise for him to learn that I also live in the NEC Development Control area and also within the long term acquisition area defined by the CVCA. Please note that there are many residents so designated across lots 26-32 on the 8th, 9th, 10th and town lines of Hilton Hills.

I personally view these intentions as an inevitable consequence of pressure for more recreational space and the need to conserve significant natural features. The plans to purchase property in this location have been public for at least four (4) years, to my knowledge, and owe nothing to the NEC for their creation. The Commission has simply embodied them into their plan as an existing constraint of a local land use authority.

The NEC is undertaking an integrated planning exercise to preserve an important feature in Ontario, the Escarpment. The scale and continuity of that feature from the Bruce to the Falls is the very reason that the job of planning is unlikely to be done effectively if left to the 50 odd constituent municipalities. However once planned the implementation is stated clearly to return to the local councils.

The planning proposals also show clearly that existing COMPATIBLE uses are unlikely to suffer under NEC direction and that certainly includes bona fide farming operations.

What may suffer under NEC planning are speculative values of land, where POTENTIAL prices and expectations have been driven up by an anticipated change of use--specifically subdivision

for rural urbanite homesites. Clearly urban development on escarpment land and strip development on agricultural land cannot continue indefinitely. The adjustment in outlook, with which the rural land owner is faced, is not substantially different to that of all other owners who have property zoned for specific uses, a situation that urban dwellers throughout Ontario seem to face without undue distress.

Mr. Von Zuben cites evidence of excessive Bruce Trail damage through our area, litter, tree and plant damage, etc. I've hiked most of the trail in the vicinity and to me, there appears to be no damage which approaches examples of that done by some people to their own land by way of clear cutting, poor grazing practices, neglect of erosion, quarrying and junk accumulation.

Ownership may seem to be a licence to irresponsible stewardship, but please give thought to the fact that owner inflicted damage in our area will outlast that ownership by decades if not centuries and certainly far exceeds the results of Trail over use. The very popularity of the Trail suggests the need for more of them, not less.

Perhaps a whole network of trails is required similar to that which has existed since time immemorial in countries older than Canada where their status is as secure as canoe portages are here.

The NEC is attempting a land use planning exercise on a scale unparalleled in Ontario history. It is a great step towards rational and appropriate development, far preferable to the ad hocery which has prevailed for many years. If the Commission is scrapped, it could be 10 years before we climb out of the ditch again, by that time the damage would be done.

Yours sincerely
John E. Mitchell

Supports NEC control

To the editor of The Herald:

In a recent letter to the Editor by Mr. Ted Von Zuben in support of protection of the Niagara Escarpment were challenged. While I agree that the NEC proposals are far from perfect, we do need to look very carefully at the best means to fulfill the original purpose of the Niagara Escarpment Act--"to protect the Escarpment as a continuous natural environment."

While my land is not scheduled for acquisition, it is within the NEC Development Control area, and we have gone through the entire process for development permits and appeal in the past year. If I were in the acquisition area, I think I would feel quite secure.

Government purchase of land of this nature is voluntary, and in the meantime we are free to sell to anyone we please, as Mr. McMullin pointed out. Mr. Von Zuben and his neighbours never were under threat of expropriation, except for a possible 60-foot strip for the Bruce Trail if all other measures failed. Now even that threat has been removed.

However, should he ever wish to sell his property, he knows that he has a ready buyer who will guarantee at least fair market price. In Mr.

Von Zuben's case, I understand that the agency offering acquisition is the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, as part of their Silver Creek area. In fact, their intentions have been known publicly for at least three or four years, and have very little to do with the NEC.

I cannot agree with Mr. McMullin's contention that the public already owns too much land. As recreation pressures continue to grow, and future energy supplies dwindle, it is vitally important that adequate supplies of recreational land be available in close proximity to the cities.

Mr. Von Zuben also raises his concerns about the costs of the NEC. But what of the costs to the taxpayers if we do not control development? The economic inefficiencies of rural sprawl are well known. And the costs of a despoiled environment can be measured in human as well as economic terms.

The province and NEC have already embarked on a shameful retreat--the loss of 60 per cent of the original planning area. For the remainder, we should be insisting on strong policies that will actually protect the Escarpment and ensure its wise use for generations to come.

Ronald A. Reid.

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