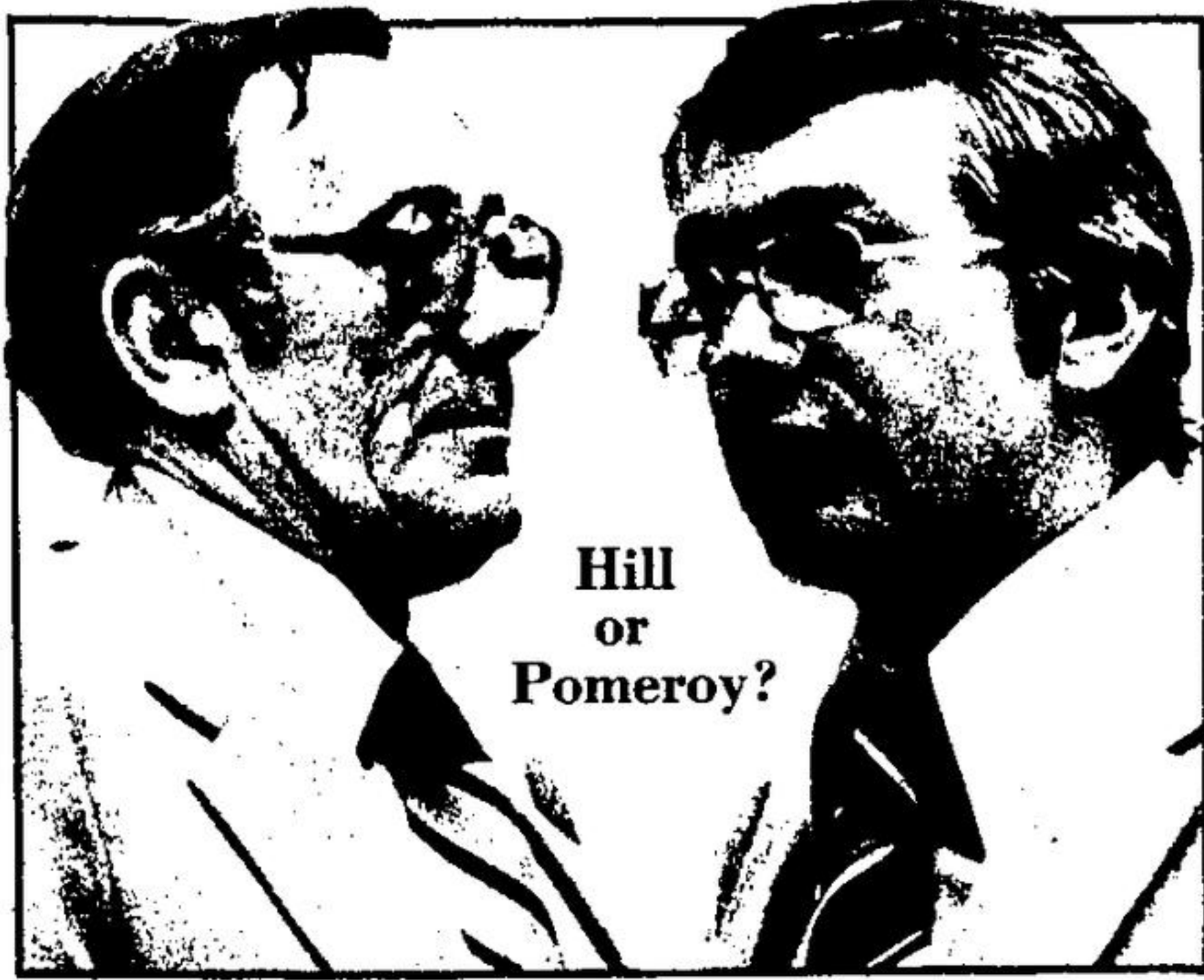


Mayorality hopefuls debate



Hill
or
Pomeroy?

By PAUL DORSEY
Herald staff writer

With the assistance of a hand-picked team of councillors and town staff members, Mayor Tom Hill says he will emerge from negotiations with Focal Properties Ltd. with "one of the best development agreements" Halton Hills council has ever had the chance to sign.

Halton Hills' first and still incumbent mayor made the commitment at Thursday's Meet the Candidates night, which was sponsored by the Georgetown Jaycees.

"Let me pick five good councillors and five of my staff and I'll come out of the Focal deal with one of the best development agreements this town's ever seen," Mayor Hill told about 200 voters who attended the meeting at Georgetown high school. "There's no way you're going to pay for a development that should be paying its own way."

However, mayorality challenger Pete Pomeroy, area councillor for Ward 3 during the past two years, blamed Mayor Hill's administration for ignoring the advice of the town planning department, and in doing so,

creating many of the problems now facing Halton Hills.

CRUCIAL STAGE

"The future of the urban (Georgetown) area is at a crucial stage," he said. "A lot of improper planning over the last five years has created a traffic problem in the area of Highway 7 between Alcott arena and Maple Avenue, and this is even before the completion of the development next to the arena, the townhouses behind the plaza and additional recreation facilities."

"Prime industrial land has been converted into strict commercial development and new recreational facilities have been established on precious industrial land across the busiest thoroughfare in our community, creating safety hazards for the people using them."

The proposed development by Focal Properties Ltd. would change the character of the community, Coun. Pomeroy warned, boosting Georgetown's population by 7,000 and necessitating the construction of two new schools and a new firehall. The town would have to shell out \$12 million to extend

municipal services, he added, representing a 19 per cent tax hike for every Halton Hills ratepayer.

"While growth is inevitable, controlled growth is mandatory," Coun. Pomeroy said. "The town must establish a tough but fair bargaining position. Emphasis must be placed on the affordability of this growth. All agreements must be made openly for the full benefit of our community, within the confines of our budget and not under the threat of a \$27 million lawsuit."

COUNTRY BOY

Mayor Hill, who described himself as "just a country boy, and proud of it," cited Halton Hills' sound economic situation, in comparison to that of Halton region's other area municipalities, as a major achievement of his administration.

Milton presently has a \$100 per capita debenture debt, he reported, while Oakville's is \$125 and Burlington's is \$167. Halton Hills' per capita debenture debt, in contrast, is only \$40, he said.

"Taxes are going up," he warned, nevertheless. "There's no way we're going to

be able to stop it as long as we have no control over the school board's spending. For my part, I'll do my best to hold down spending in all my (town) departments while still keeping up their services."

Mayor Hill explained that, for an average Acton home, based upon a \$4,887 assessment, the town's portion of annual taxes amounts to \$170, compared with \$63 in taxes imposed by the regional council and nearly \$318 designated for school board purposes.

Mayor Hill claimed that regional council recently adopted a policy of implementing equalized water rates following "quite a battle" among councillors. Halton Hills regional councillors, along with the mayor, won the victory only after they got Oakville and Burlington representatives "fighting amongst themselves", according to Mayor Hill.

NEW SYSTEM

The new system of basing water bills on municipal assessment, which comes into effect at the beginning of the new year, means that an Acton consumer whose water

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YOUR MORNING SMILE

The city editor has just been informed that a wire had fallen across Main Street in a storm. He assigned two reporters to the story. "No one knows whether the wire is live or not," the editor explained. "So one of you is to touch it and the other write the story."

the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills Wednesday, November 8, 1978

The big paper with the big circulation read first by everyone. Reaching more than 13,350 homes in Halton Hills

This Week

Child abuse report

Herald staff writer Maggie Hannah takes an in-depth look at child abuse: its roots, its effects and how to prevent in a two-page Herald Report. Pages 15, 16

Acton commencement

Acton High School held commencement ceremonies last Friday night and a large turnout packed the school's cafeteria to honor the class of '78. Page 23

Terra Cotta candidates

It looks like a tight race in Caledon's Ward 2 for the area council seat. The Ward includes nearby Terra Cotta and a look at the candidates can be found in this week's Herald. Page 23

No billiards, bagatelle

It looks like Halton Hills' billiards and bagatelle fans can forget about playing in town. At a closed door session town council blocked the opening of three games rooms in town. Page 18

Hallowe'en fun



The witches were out in full force last week as were a healthy host of goblins to celebrate Hallowe'en. Herald photographer Lori Taylor was there for the fun. Page 10

Acton beats Georgetown

Acton basketball teams did very well in action against Georgetown last week. The juniors and seniors both won. Page 21

Tri-county hockey

There was plenty of action on the Tri-county hockey front. Georgetown teams fared very well in most of the games. Page 22

Tabbies top Rebels

The GDHS senior football Rebels lost 33-17 to Blakelock Tabbies in the Halton semi-finals. Page 21

Runners win

The GDHS harriers won in two divisions at the OFSSA meet in Scarborough over the weekend. Junior runner Ian Clark won in his division. Page 19

No Neilson expansion here

William Neilson Ltd. has dropped plans for a proposed expansion of its Georgetown plant in favour of expansion and renovation at its Gladstone Avenue plant in Toronto.

Company president Don McCarthy said the Georgetown facility will continue to operate as its national distribution centre and will not be affected by the decision to remain in the city.

Pomeroy on hearing of the decision said that his immediate reaction was to question why this had happened.

"This is another example of how urgently communication between industries and the mayor's office is needed," he said. "An immediate meeting should be called between Neilson's and the town officials to see if there is any change of reversing this decision. We need the jobs that this expansion would provide."

Mayor Hill could not be located to make a comment at press time.

Sewage treatment capacity for future Neilson's expansion was included in the allotments set out in November 1977 during the Ontario Municipal Board hearing into Focal Properties proposed Silver Creek housing development on the Ninth Line.

Miller says town is 'shafting' taxpayers should not cut Jehovah's Witnesses' levy



OH NO, NOT SNOW

Last week's Indian summer weather notwithstanding, some are residents fully realize that it won't be long now before the Great Outdoors begins to turn very, very white. Gary Cunningham and Bret Robertson figured they'd get some early practice in building snow forts by taking advantage of the piles of frozen

stuff regularly dumped outside the Georgetown Memorial arena by the town's Zamboni. Homeowners who have forgotten how to shovel snow since last April are invited to contact the boys for some learned advice.

Photo by Paul Dorsey

Milton mayor says town in a 'hole' over uniform regional water rates

Halton Hills regional councillors are "digging a hole" for their municipality to be buried in by supporting Halton's forthcoming switch to equalized water and sewer rates, according to Milton Mayor Don Gordon.

"We'll take that chance," was Halton Hills Mayor Tom Hill's unconcerned response last Wednesday when a regional council vote to leave the final decision as to the means of implementing the new rates up to Halton's 1979-80 council.

Opponents of council's recent decision to abandon its four-year old system of having individual municipalities pay for the water and sewer services they receive took the opportunity last week to once again challenge the wisdom of the move, which is set for implementation Jan. 1. At that time, Halton's four area municipalities will begin paying for services on a revenue basis, rather than an assessment basis, which means that smaller, urban centres like Acton will be assisted by the rest of Halton in paying for recent extensive improvements to its water and sewer facilities.

Staff recommendations placed before council last week but referred to the next council for consideration would grant homeowners across Halton a 15 per cent

reduction on sewer surcharges that are planned for implementation for the first time next June 30. Initially, council intended to make the surcharge 105 per cent of the residents' water bill, with a corresponding reduction in mill rates for each municipality.

Also, domestic consumers would not receive a sewer surcharge on water consumed in excess of 100,000 gallons during a single calendar year.

Industrial and commercial consumers who use a significant portion of their municipal water supply for manufactur-

ing and other processes would be able to apply to a special regional committee for a surcharge reduction of less than 75 per cent of the water used is directed into regional sanitary sewers.

A public relations program is proposed to inform all Halton consumers of the region's plans and whatever effect the new system of billing will have upon them personally.

Most importantly, the recommendations, if approved next year, would authorize staff to apply to the provincial government for a \$2,525,296

special assistance grant which would enable Halton to maintain the rates that have been endorsed until at least Dec. 31, 1980 and to provide domestic consumers with the proposed 15 per cent sewer surcharge reduction until at least the end of 1982.

Oakville Coun. Carl Eriksen, who has consistently been one of council's strongest opponents to the equalized rates system, urged council last week to take advantage of its final opportunity to reject the concept and "uphold the authority of local government".

"This is our last opportunity to remain fiscally responsible at the local level by retaining the charge-back system," he said. "The charge-back system may not have much support at Queen's Park but it has worked well in Halton."

Coun. Eriksen contended that the province's \$2.5 million grant is still taxpayers' money and fails to provide any financial assurances after 1982. At that point, he predicted, Halton residents will suffer from a huge financial impact.

Burlington Mayor Mary Murray called the motion referring the decision to the incoming council a "Cop-out" that would be unfair to new council members, regional staff and the ratepayers themselves. She challenged members who were

termining the new system a "user-pay" arrangement, pointing out that "it's not

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Town rethinks plaza as developer appeals

A developer's appeal to have his proposal for a major shopping centre in Acton "east" reconsidered won town council's approval Monday night, but not before some harsh words were exchanged around the council table.

Jerry Sprackman of Land-aw Shopping Centres Ltd. persuaded council to defer a planning board decision by which his proposal to build a 90,000-square foot shopping plaza on Acton's eastern boundary had been deemed "pre-mature".

The board made the decision last week after downtown Acton businessmen warned that the plaza would nullify their efforts to beautify the central business core.

Mr. Sprackman and consultant Henry Joseph, who conducted a survey of the Acton retail market for Land-aw, presented the council with a "clarification" of statistics outlined before the planning board last week and immediately challenged by established Acton businessmen.

ZEH'S COMMITMENT Brandishing a written commitment by the Zehr's supermarket chain to establish an outlet at the proposed Acton plaza, Mr. Sprackman explained that different methods of interpreting the consultants' survey results apparently led the planning board to conclude that his plaza would have to rely on a major residential development proposed for the same area. This, he said, is not true.

Town planning director Mario Venditti admitted that his initial appraisal of the company's survey figures was based on a misunderstanding of the survey's terms of reference. He expressed willingness

to reconsider the proposal. Mr. Venditti explained that the company's initial presentation of its survey results based its findings on the assumption that Acton's primary trade area would include all the residents of the proposed Acton East subdivision, a development that many councillors agree will not be realized for many years, if at all.

The actual trade area involves only about 7,000 to 8,000 people, Mr. Venditti said, or about half the number quoted in the original survey.

Mr. Sprackman stressed that his company's proposal has not changed. The survey results have merely been clarified, Mr. Joseph confirmed.

"I'd like to go on record as being very much in support of putting this kind of development in Acton East," planning

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