

ICG continues fight despite OMB decision

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place later this month at Queen's Park.

In its decision, the OMB commented that its main concern was the effect of the corridor upon local farming operations and the affected landowners. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Dyer briefly reviewed testimony submitted at the hearing by Hydro witnesses John Bousfield, Walter Inkis and Alan Watson and by witnesses called by the corridor opponents, Halton Hills deputy planner Brian Kropf, project consultants Bruce Howlett and Ken Slater, biologist Dr. Frederick Gilbert and Mr. Minns. Also briefly recounted was the evidence of Halton Hills farmer Reford Gardhouse, whose prize cattle breeding operation is already being carried out beneath a 230,000-volt line. The Bruce to Milton corridor would parallel that line.

"(Mr. Gardhouse) pointed out that he could live with one line on a 250-foot right-of-way, but he would have to think further about the advisability of continuing to farm if the route were widened to 600 or 700 feet," the OMB reported.

The board nevertheless concluded that financial compensation to such affected landowners would enable farming operations to "continue safely."

"In terms of people, obviously the farmer who will continue to farm his land around the towers and under the lines is most affected," the ruling states. "The evidence has satisfied us that the farm operation can be carried on in a safe manner. Because the towers will be 800 feet apart, there will not be more than two towers per farm and in most cases, the base of the towers will straddle the lot line so that only one-half of the towers will be on each farm."

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FULL LENGTH
"This is not the case on Mr. Gardhouse's farm and others where the farms run the full length of the concession. No alternative route was suggested or proposed throughout the hearing. The evidence has convinced us that the connection is necessary and the subject route will minimize the impact on the area as much as possible."

Mr. Gardhouse, an ICG director, told reporters last week that he was "stunned" by the OMB's decision. He called the hearing conducted in early January a "sham".

ICG vice-chairman John Schneider, contacted soon after the OMB decision was released, explained that he had not examined the ruling, but commented that he was surprised that nine days of testimony could be weighed and summarized in such a short period of time.

Following a three-day hearing last year in which the OMB weighed a similar Hydro application for permission to build part of the Nanticoke to Pickering corridor through H Halton Hills, he noted, the board members took about three months to reach their decision.

ROUTE SUGGESTED
The ICG questions the OMB's comment that no alternative route for the corridor was suggested, Mr. Minns said. While the board may have been referring specifically to alternative alignments for the corridor through Halton Hills, there was in fact extensive evidence given with regard to alternative routes from Bruce that would substantially change the corridor's direction, he said.

The OMB's inherent decision to overrule the authority of the Ontario Municipal Act while supporting the Power Corporations Act will be tested this spring, before a divisional

court, if the ICG decides to proceed with its application for a hearing. The nature and ramifications of that hearing were outlined at length for The Herald by ICG officials three weeks ago.

Prior to that time, however, ICG members and one of their outspoken supporters, MPP Julian Reed, are expected to meet with Premier Davis and several Hydro representatives

to discuss the corridor issue.

"I think this may be the slowdown," Mr. Minns commented, pointing out that both Ontario Hydro and the ministry of energy are currently undergoing administrative changes. Hydro officials will be presenting load forecast figures to the corporation's board of directors this week, he added, and predictions for its new building programme

are expected to be released early next month.

In a letter to Mr. Reed dated Jan. 15, Premier Davis acknowledged concern shared by the MPP and energy minister James Auld and notes that Mr. Auld had suggested a meeting over the corridor issue.

"I hope that such a meeting can be arranged so that progress can be made in resolving this long outstanding problem," Mr. Davis told Mr. Reed.

Mr. Minns reported that Mitchell Nan, an investigator from the office of the Ombudsman, has since October, been evaluating the authority of the ministry of housing in ordering the Niagara Escarpment Commission to sanction the construction of the corridor through its planning control area, as was done in July.

About the Hills

Fitness Week speakers

The Georgetown Kinsmen Club members will be doing their bit for Fitness Week next Wednesday when they host a meeting of all Georgetown service clubs in the Lion's Den at 8 p.m. to hear guest speakers discuss various aspects of fitness. Norm Woods, director of national products for Participation, will discuss the benefits of fitness, Canadian fitness statistics and family programs aimed at increasing fitness. Don Payne, senior fitness consultant for Fitness Ontario, will be speaking on the benefits of exercise and fitness and the various fitness programs (such as employee fitness and student fitness) which can be incorporated into the daily lives of most Canadians. Both men will accompany their talk with visual presentations and audience questions and comments will be welcomed.

Heritage celebration

A Heritage Celebration presented by Ross Milne, M.P. and the Kinsmen Club of Brampton is set to go at Brampton's Shoppers World from 11 a.m. to five p.m. on Saturday, February 17. Local multicultural groups will have displays set up at the mall, and traditional ethnic dances will be performed on stage throughout the day.

Historical society

The Esqueping Historical Society will meet in the Norval Community Centre at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 22. The topic for this meeting is the old village of Norval. Guests speaking on various aspects of life in the village will be Julian Reed, Margaret Russell and Murray Laird.

Y annual meeting

Georgetown YM-YWCA will hold its annual meeting in St. Andrew's United Church on Mountainview Rd. S., at 8 p.m. Feb. 21.

Spring fashion show

Home sewers are invited to a spring and summer fashion show in St. Andrew's United Church on March 6 at 8 p.m. Fashions will be presented by Stretch and Sew of Lakeshore Rd. W., Mississauga for the 5th Georgetown Guide Company auxiliary. Tickets are available from Iris Blendell, (877-3165), Carol Thompson (877-1074) and Joan Lovegrove (877-8032) or other members of the auxiliary.

Fire telephone numbers

Recent fire incidents show the need for knowing the fire departments emergency phone number. In one incident, four phone calls were made before the fire department was notified of a fire. Not only does this serve to confuse the person trying to report a fire, but more importantly it gives the fire a chance to get a strong foothold on the building. Time is crucial in any fire situation and a difference of 60 seconds could mean life and death for a small child trapped in a burning building. Prompt notification is also essential if the fire department is expected to do an efficient job in combating a fire. It is very important to call the fire department as soon as a fire is discovered, no matter how small it may seem. Time delays experience when occupants try to extinguish a fire before calling the fire department, are only invitations to disaster. Any delay in reporting a fire reduces the fire departments chance of controlling a fire. The phone numbers for the Halton Hills Fire Department are: 853-1212 (Acton) and 877-3221 (Georgetown). Now is a good time to write the number in your new phone book. The fire department has a limited number of telephone stickers available and may be obtained by calling 877-5185 ext. 45 during office hours, or 877-1133 after hours.

OMB hearing on park plan

Continued from page one

lial use were rejected following two separate OMB hearings held in 1964 and 1967. Mr. Kropf said. The southerly portion remains zoned as open space.

A 1976 petition by neighboring residents asking that the area be developed as a passive park drew criticism from Halton Hills' engineer and recreation director, which in turn prompted the town planner to recommend the site for residential development. Mr. Kropf told the committee:

After explaining that the town has full authority to dispose of Leishman Park provided that any funds received in return are allocated to the development of recreational or park facilities elsewhere in town, Mr. Kropf said the immediate neighborhood has adequate park space, including access to the 3.8-acre Bovis Park.

CRITICAL COMPONENT
The deputy planner added that the disposition of Leishman Park is "a critical component" in ongoing negotiations over the acquisition of 3.4 acres of vacant land on Elizabeth Drive, adjacent to Prospect Park. He reminded the committee that council authorized last March the trading of Leishman Park property for lands on Elizabeth Drive.

"Having reviewed (the by-law) in detail, particularly in light of the objections expressed, we find no reason to alter the conclusions and recommendation reached in the first planning report, dated June 23, 1976," Mr. Kropf stated. "In our opinion, the lands are inappropriate for active recreational purposes and are surplus to the need of the neighborhood. . . . While the parcel could be upgraded to serve as a passive park. . . we feel an alternative site would be the better choice."

In his presentation to the committee, Mr. Payne recalled that the OMB, after evaluating Acton's initial application to develop the land, suggested that the town should establish

a park with a citizen's committee of management, an idea that he said appealed to the neighboring residents.

Mr. Payne contended that the neighboring residents had "done their part" in keeping Leishman Park clean for their children and in defending its use before the OMB. He asked whether the committee members felt it is fair to place the issue before the OMB a third time and thus incur additional expense for residents who are objecting to its proposed development.

Mr. Payne expressed doubt that increasing demand for residential development in the future will diminish the public's need for the park. On the contrary, he said, arguments for the preservation of Leishman Park would be "intensified."

Coun. Mike Armstrong said the 1977-78 council may not have been aware that Leishman Park had already been the subject of OMB hearings where public objections were heard and suggested that the bylaw should be repealed.

Councillors Russ Miller and George Maltby pointed out, however, that the land has been generally unused and undeveloped for the past 14 years and the town still doesn't know what to do with the land. The motion to repeal the bylaw was subsequently defeated.

Coun. Ross Knechtel, a resident of Rosemary Drive near the site, declared a conflict of interest in the matter and did not vote on the final motion to forward the bylaw to the OMB along with objections received.

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