



FLOOR COLLAPSES DURING DEMOLITION

Workmen clearing out the debris on the site of what used to be the Dominion Hotel in Acton last week ran into something of a problem when a bulldozer fell through the

first floor into what used to be the basement of the hotel. Work was delayed for a while, until the bulldozer was rescued.

(Herald photo)

Main St. resident angry about reconstruction

After enduring months of dust and construction noise and losing an ornamental mail box, a stone wall, the temporary use of his once-satisfactory driveway and, finally, his patience, Louw Broadfield of Georgetown likely has few kind words about Halton Hills and Halton region.

The 11-year resident of Main Street South found only three supporters on town council Monday night when he presented a lengthy list of complaints about the nearly-completed reconstruction project which he said he never requested.

A majority of councillors voted against granting Mr. Broadfield a precedent-setting \$500 "concession" for what Coun. Roy Booth termed the "undue hardships" he had endured. Following the firm advice of town engineering staff, council declined to pave the resident's formerly gravel driveway.

LITTLE DOUBT

There appeared to be little doubt from the start that council would accept Mayor Pete Pomeroy's suggestion to expedite approval for the 35-foot paving job until Coun. Mike Armstrong rose to demand a better reason for establishing "an unfavorable precedent".

The many "hardships" encountered by Mr. Broadfield during the reconstruction period merely supported justification to do the job on the grounds that the resident's private driveway is much worse now because of the project. Coun. Booth contended. The reasons still weren't good enough for a majority of councillors, however.

Mr. Broadfield displayed a copy of the town's letter to affected homeowners distributed along Main Street South early this year, in which they were advised to bring any complaints or problems to the attention of an on-site inspector.

"A certain amount of inconvenience is unavoidable," the letter warned, "but we will make every attempt to keep it to a minimum."

"I never asked for a major undertaking," Mr. Broadfield told council, explaining that his only request to the town in the past was for some road re-grading to alleviate the visibility problem created by the crest of the hill immediately above his driveway entrance.

POOL PARTIES

Guests at Mr. Broadfield's two regular summer pool parties had difficulty finding parking places for their cars, the resident commented, despite his pleas to the town for co-operation on the two specified dates.

At the outset of construction, he continued, his mailbox, as well as its sculpted, chain-link stand, were removed by region workmen along with speed limit signs. Mail service to his home did not resume for weeks, he said.

The contractor's agreement required the spreading of calcium chloride to cut down on dust, Mr. Broadfield said, but instead the practice was soon replaced by the use of a water truck and dust continued to cause problems.

"I spent a lot of time in my swimming pool this summer," he angrily reported. "All of it vacuuming."

On another occasion, he recalled, a construction worker asked permission to use Mr. Broadfield's garden hose to mix materials. Moments later, the resident returned to find the borrower threatening his barking pet dog with a "club".

The project inspector, he added, was rarely to be found. Of the workers who could speak English, he said, most blamed problems on the town or region.

Mr. Broadfield complained that his house wasn't the only home in the area to go for several days without water, despite repeated assurances from the contractor that problems were being investigated.

Another incident occurred immediately after Mr. Broadfield had phoned town officials to offer his co-operation in keeping the extra vehicles parked in his driveway out of the contractor's way. Soon after, he said, his wife was confronted by an angry foreman who demanded that the cars be moved immediately, since they were blocking his machinery.

CONCRETE WALL

A concrete retaining wall, described by deputy town engineer Ted Ballinger as "unstable", was removed, but soon replaced with a "far superior dry stone wall at the town's full expense". Mr. Broadfield pointed out, though, that the wall has not been fenced to prevent anyone from falling off the top. While the town points to the absence of children from the area as a reason for not fencing the wall, the resident noted that anyone who did fall could be seriously hurt and possibly might sue the nearest property owner.

At the centre of Mr. Broadfield's problems, however, is the driveway which previously featured a long, flat stretch across most of its 35 feet before dropping sharply to the roadway. Mr. Broadfield claimed to have spread granular material over the drive regularly during the past three or four years.

Now that the driveway had to be regraded to meet flush with the regraded roadway, though, it features one long incline and only a small level area near the resident's home. In addition, Mr. Broadfield complained, his layers of gravel have been replaced with six inches of packing material which covers a watermain with only a foot and a half of soil, compared to the three-foot cover found before.

Mr. Broadfield conceded that most of his concerns are

now "history", having been eliminated by time or by the efforts of the town and region. He asked, though, that the town pave his double driveway as a form of compensation for the regrading and inconveniences he endured during the reconstruction, a move which Mr. Ballinger said contravened town policy.

"In accordance with this policy, our original intent was to reconstruct the driveway with gravel and not pave any portion of it," the deputy engineer explained. "However, at the owner's request, we agreed to pave to the property line at the town's expense as a measure of goodwill in view of the substantial grade change required at the driveway. At the time this understanding was reached, the owner proceeded to negotiate a price with the road contractor to pave the remainder of the driveway at the owner's expense."

Mr. Ballinger reported that paving the driveway as far as the property line cost the town \$400. To pave the rest will cost another \$600, he said, with none of the cost subsidizable.

Mayor Pomeroy, one of several council members to visit the site and meet Mr. Broadfield before the meeting, echoed Mr. Ballinger's words describing the resident's inconveniences as being "common to road reconstruction".

ANOTHER VISITOR

Another visitor to the scene, Coun. Booth contended that the town should pave as much of the driveway as it had regraded and ensure that the underground watermain was well-covered.

Mr. Ballinger explained that the sub-contractor is expected to visit the scene and determine how much cover has been spread on top of the main. If insufficient, he said, the main will be lowered. The regrading of the driveway, he added, was a "trade-off" for lowering the crest of the Main Street hill.

Coun. Harry Levy's comment that the "out of the ordinary circumstances" surrounding the situation justified the town's compliance with Mr. Broadfield's wishes had little effect on his colleagues. A majority voted against the paving request.

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