

Levy charges 'sell-out'

Angry words punctuate Focal debate



C'MON NOW, ONE AT A TIME

(Herald photo by Lori Taylor)

The spirits were on the prowl on All Hallow's Eve last Wednesday, and those brave souls who ventured out to go trick or treating from door to door were taking their chances. The Georgetown Public Library held open house on Hallowe'en Eve for children who wanted to hide indoors, away from the spooks

and goblins ready to catch the unwary, or for those who wanted a rest in the strenuous round of candy-collecting. The library distributed candy, and provided the children with some games to play, including trying to bite the apple off the string, as this group of children seems determined to do.

By PAUL DORSEY
 Herald Editor

Mayor Pete Pomeroy has persuaded town council to postpone any development commitments for land south of Georgetown, despite charges that the move is a prelude to approval for the massive housing scheme of Focal Properties Ltd.

Coun. Harry Levy accused Mayor Pomeroy Monday night of making fellow council members "look like a bunch of idiots" by holding private meetings without their knowledge with developers who have land interests in the rural area south of Silver Creek.

The mayor not only denied having misled council about ongoing negotiations with the firm seeking to build 1,740 homes in that area, he angrily criticized Coun. Levy for his "innuendoes" and complained that council as a whole is far too reluctant to accept development proposals.

By a vote of 9-4, council endorsed Mayor Pomeroy's motion requesting the provincial ministry of housing to defer judgement on the lands bounded by 10 Sidersoad, Silver Creek and the Eighth and Tenth Lines when considering approval for the new Halton region official plan.

CONFIDENCE VOTE
 The support offered by councillors Roy Booth, Ed Wood, Terry Miller, Pat Patterson, George Malby and Mike Armstrong amounted to a vote of confidence in the efforts of the mayor.

Those opposing the motion were councillors Levy, John McDonald, Walter Blehn and Marilyn Serjeantson. Also voicing opposition to the move was Lawrie Duggan, president of the Georgetown Area Ratepayers Association, who saw the omission of Focal's lands from the regional plan as a preliminary step toward the

development's approval, which he called "the height of folly".

Coun. Levy's prepared statement to his colleagues followed a 40-minute closed-door session during which council discussed unspecified aspects of the matter with town solicitor Ray Steele.

"In approving (the mayor's) motion, we will be opening the floodgates to development far beyond that which any of us could contemplate," he warned. "We are not looking merely at Focal's proposal to build over 1,800 residential units, but also at the fact that Focal have also indicated they want additional expansion, if the current project were approved, on other lands they also own south of the proposed development."

"Also bear in mind that there are other developers who have even larger land holdings than Focal and they too are going to demand approval of their proposals. Where will all this end?"

Coun. Levy said that council should not be misled by the mayor's references to demand for industrial growth.

ONLY OPTION

"It is true that we have very little serviced, industrial land available, but to suggest that good agricultural land, south of Silver Creek, is our only option, is totally wrong," he said.

Coun. Levy also cited limitations to development which have yet to be overcome and pointed out that there is "very little evidence" Focal's \$27 million lawsuit against the town for alleged breach of contract in development agreements could ever be successful in the courts.

"There is no way, even if the technology were available that our sewage capacity could be expanded from 30,000 to 45,000 equivalent without a huge debt burden on the existing residents," he added.

Coun. Levy recalled that the August 13 meeting of the general committee saw Mayor Pomeroy publicly deny he had held private meetings with local developers, a statement prompted by erroneous reports of an anticipated settlement between Focal and the town.

Councillors learned at that meeting that Focal chief Bruce McLaughlin had told Toronto investors in a speech that he expected approval soon for his Halton Hills proposal.

As a possible result of Mr.

Rest home hits snags

Town council has stopped just short of scrapping plans for the conversion of Chapel Street school into a rest home following a hard-hitting attack from the developer involved.

Magnus Paulson, consultant and spokesman for Chateau Belair Developments Ltd. and Reid Cooper Ltd., questioned the "democracy" of a recommendation by Coun. Roy Booth which would have seen the conversion scheme abandoned nearly a year after it was first unveiled to the town.

Last June, the town granted conditional approval to the proposed renovation of the historic Georgetown school building as a rest home for up to 100 elderly citizens. A major concern raised at that time, however, was the possibility the rest home plan could hamper efforts by the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital Board to find support for a proposed nursing home.

AT LAST TUESDAY'S

planning board meeting, Mr. Paulson presented councillors with a pre-dated letter from deputy minister of health Tom Campbell, indicating there would be no conflict between the two proposals.

PUBLIC DEMAND

Subsequently, though, long-awaited comments invited from the Halton District Health Council have been received, partially contradicting the ministry's official word. Health Council director William Leonard contended in his comments that the proposed rest home would no doubt accommodate a portion of the public demand for such an extended care facility in Halton Hills, thus possibly undermining the hospital board's bid to build a major nursing home on the hospital grounds.

"I think we've let the string go out on this long enough," Coun. Booth concluded Monday night. "I was very concerned at the beginning that we should find some way to have Chapel Street school serve the area in some way. This appeared on the surface to be the type of development which would be a real asset to the town."

"After reviewing all the concerns of the region, the Health Council and others, I think this proposal is not in the best interests of the neighborhood and of the town as a whole."

Despite two attempts by Coun. Booth to have the project rejected outright, council voted 8-5 to follow through on the planning board's request for a staff report examining concerns and possible solutions.

Those responding to Mr. Paulson's terse reaction to the recommendation were councillors Ed Wood, Ross Knechtel, Pat Patterson, George Malby, Russ Miller, John McDonald, Mike Armstrong and Harry Levy.

Those siding with Coun. Booth were Mayor Pete Pomeroy and councillors Marilyn Serjeantson, Terry

Grubbe and Walter Blehn.

FOUR MONTHS

"It's been four months since we sought clarification (of the basic differences between a private rest home and a publicly-licensed and operated nursing home)," Mr. Paulson told the planning board last week. "This letter from the deputy minister should satisfy you that the ministry doesn't regard us as potential competition if and when the hospital tries to build its nursing home."

Mr. Paulson predicted there would be no problems accommodating standards to be outlined in a forthcoming report from Halton region, and questioned the alleged interest of other neighborhood landowners in acquiring all or part of the adjacent road allowance, slated to be closed and sold by the town in conjunction with the school's conversion.

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'RUNNING' A HIT

Maclean's magazine has given the movie "Running" a less than enthusiastic review, and the Toronto Star's Clyde Gilmour was only a little more favorable, but Halton Hills Councillor Walter Blehn has seen the movie, and he's recommending Georgetown residents see it.

Coun. Blehn told his colleagues Monday night that, while the movie won't win an Academy Award, it is "an excellent movie, well produced and worth seeing."

Area residents who want to see the scenes filmed in Georgetown will have to keep their eyes open, because these scenes filmed on Main Street take up slightly more than two minutes on screen, Coun. Blehn said. There is another brief scene filmed near the paper mill dam hill, he said.

"It's nice to have a resident critic on council," Coun. Mike Armstrong joked.



QUITE A SHOW

Jean Wakefield was on hand Saturday at the Georgetown branch of the Halton Hills Public Library to talk to people about the display of figurines and china, much of it Royal Doulton, which she had provided for viewing. The pieces came from Wakefield Antiques, a business run by Mrs. Wakefield and her husband, Ed. (Herald photo)

This Week

Trapping

Although council recently agreed to the use of leg-hold traps in Halton Hills, certain members still had reservations and requested a Ministry of Natural Resources spokesman to attend Monday's meeting to clear up some of their concerns. Page 3

Lest we forget

Remembrance Day is one of the Royal Canadian Legion's most important annual events. Legion correspondent Roma Timpon outlines the significance of the poppy and the uses to which the Legion puts funds raised through the sale of poppies each year. Page 17

Tut's a knock-out

King Tut may be very ancient Egyptian history, but his treasures are creating very modern, wide-spread interest among visitors at the Royal Canadian Museum these days. Columnist Gerry Landsborough was among media visitors who attended the special press viewing there recently. Pages

Town ready to withdraw from corridor dispute

Although officials of the Interested Citizens Group (ICG) vow that their own end of the battle is not yet over, the town of Halton Hills appears ready to concede defeat to Ontario Hydro, three and a half years after the utility first applied for permission to build a 500,000-volt transmission corridor along the Fifth Concession.

"There's no question in my mind we have to do this," Mayor Pete Pomeroy said last Tuesday night as the town planning board considered a staff report recommending adoption of pertinent bylaws.

There were no objections offered by board members as the recommendation was weighed before a crowd of spectators that included officials of both the ICG and Ontario Hydro, still locked in legal combat after nearly seven years of planning and debate.

Only a two-week reprieve prompted by the mayor's request for a solicitor's report on the legality of certain details in the forthcoming bylaws prevented the ICG from abruptly losing its main ally last week.

Once town solicitor Ray Steele confirms or corrects aspects of the bylaws dealing with lands along the corridor

route still under Niagara Escarpment Commission control, bylaws will be brought before council to amend Esqueping's official plan and zoning legislation, and the towers forming the last link in

Hydro's 100-mile long super-corridor will be completed.

NO PROBLEMS

"I don't foresee any problems coming out of the solicitor's report," Mayor Pomeroy commented, "and I don't think

Citizens group still opposed

By LORI TAYLOR
 Herald staff writer

The Interested Citizens Group (ICG) plans to appeal a Supreme Court ruling on the Bruce to Milton hydro corridor but remains undecided about its course of action because of an anticipated move by the town to allow the corridor to proceed.

Walter Scott, of the ICG executive, told The Herald this week that position of the group is unchanged.

"Our position is that we would like to see some justification for putting the line in," Mr. Scott said. "They haven't justified it yet. They haven't even addressed the question."

Mr. Scott said the ICG will be appealing the Supreme Court ruling to the provincial Cabinet, and possibly the OMB

ruling as well. "The ruling of the court was that they basically didn't want to get involved," Mr. Scott said.

"The (town) planning board is elected by the people to do what is best for the people," Mr. Scott said. "I understand if they don't comply with the OMB ruling, they can be subject to legal action or impeachment. If they can't do what they think is best for Halton Hills, that more or less places them in the position of being a rubber stamp for the province. I'm not opposed to regional government, but I have to wonder where that puts us."

The ICG will be meeting this week to decide how to respond to the town's proposed withdrawal from the case.

this delay is going to do anything injurious to either party. It's a precautionary measure."

No doubt raising eyebrows among ICG officials is the planning department's advice to let Hydro submit a simple, written "undertaking," rather than a formal Site Plan Agreement, in which it will promise the town "in good faith" to meet municipal and provincial standards regarding vehicular access points, road widening and easements, gates and fences, cutting and replanting of woodlots, alterations to drainage courses and grading.

"While a Site Plan Agreement has obvious advantages, the necessity of enacting a special bylaw and the time delay associated with it would not be justified in our opinion, especially if Hydro is prepared to make such an undertaking," deputy planning director Brian Kropf said. "A commitment of that nature would assure the town that any reasonable requests for easements and road widening across the corridor would be willingly granted by Hydro as future needs arise, and also that Hydro's construction program would proceed after consultation with appropriate environ-

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