

McLaughlin meets the Chamber

Focal's chief stresses co-operation

Conflict in rest home rejection?

Acting on the advice of town solicitor Ray Steele, three members of town council have declared conflicts of interest regarding the proposed rest home facility in Georgetown.

The simultaneous declarations were made at Monday's council meeting prior to a ratifying vote on an earlier planning board decision to deny a rezoning application for the Chapel Street school site for use as a private rest home.

The rezoning was denied by council, effectively ending a year-long debate on the proposal.

While making the declarations, the three council members, Mayor Pete Pomeroy, Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson and Coun. Roy Booth explained that they were doing so only on the precautionary advice of the solicitor, and not because they were sure they had any conflicts of interest.

It was at the board meeting last week that possible conflicts were first discussed. Magnus Paulson, consultant and spokesman for Chateau Belair Developments and Reid Cooper Ltd., made the dramatic and unexpected suggestion during his last-ditch attempt to keep the rest home proposal alive.

"I would like to suggest, as

recommended reading, the Municipal Conflicts of Interest Act", he told the board without further explanation.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE
 Mayor Pomeroy immediately responded by declaring a conflict on the matter.

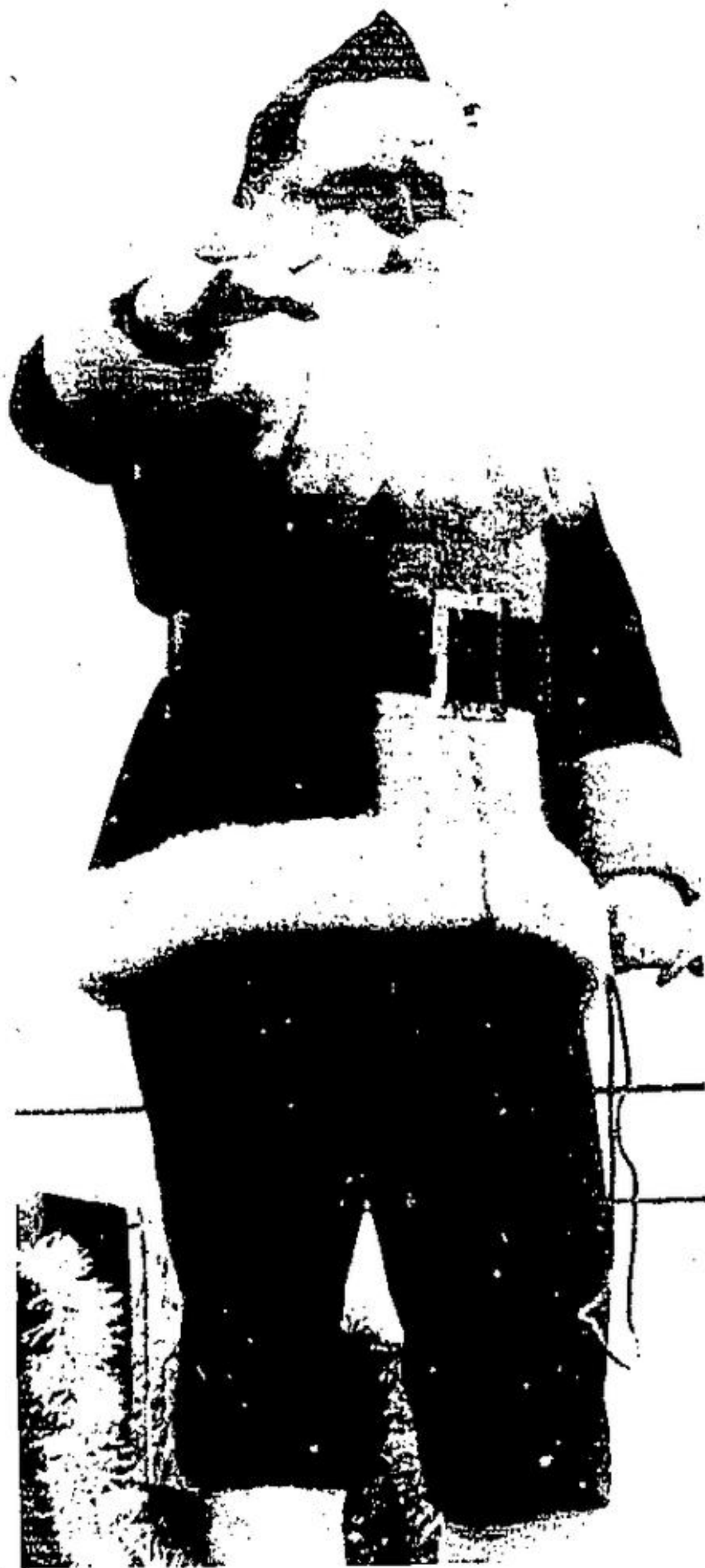
When asked why he was doing so by Coun. Booth, Mayor Pomeroy said it was a precautionary measure until he could seek the advice of the solicitor.

Coun. Booth and Coun. Serjeantson, who along with Mayor Pomeroy are members of the Georgetown Hospital board, decided to vote in favor of denying application, then seek legal advice.

Mr. Paulson made his suggestion when it became apparent the majority of planning board members were against the rest home proposal.

The consultant contended he had not been given sufficient opportunity to respond to objections to the proposal raised by the hospital board, the Halton District Health Council and Halton region's social services department.

The board disagreed with Mr. Paulson about the availability of time for meetings with objectors and approved the recommendation to deny rezoning.



SENSATIONAL SANTA

Santa Claus arrived in Georgetown Saturday in the annual Lions Club parade. There were 49 entries in this year's parade, including eight bands, marchers, and clowns. Plaques for winning entries will be presented at the Lions dinner December 18 at the Lions Hall. For more pictures of the parade, see page 2 and 3.

(Herald photo)

By RICHARD PETRASHEK
 Herald Staff Writer

Bruce McLaughlin, president of Focal Properties Ltd., is tired of fighting the community and has asked the people of Halton Hills to "suspend their disbelief" and seek an "air of co-operation".

Referring to the controversy surrounding his proposed 1,740 home development south of Georgetown, Mr. McLaughlin told the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce last week that "it is time for us all to have the humility to back down from strong positions and commit ourselves to co-operation".

The speech centred on the developer's desire to see a more harmonious relationship between builders and the community, but also included

responses to recent allegations about his ongoing attempts to expedite approval for the Focal subdivision.

Mr. McLaughlin, standing at the podium with the self-assurance of a seasoned politician, opened his speech with a friendly "hi, neighbors", adding that his company has been a major corporate citizen of nearby Mississauga.

Indicating his desire to co-operate, Mr. McLaughlin informed those present he is prepared to make his development more acceptable in keeping with the town's desires.

NOT ACCEPTABLE
 "Your elected representatives have told us that the plans, as submitted by our company and other landowners in the area, are not acceptable to

them", he explained. "Therefore, we have agreed and we are prepared to change planners and to select a planner who is acceptable to this community. His instructions will be to design an addition to the existing community of which we all can be proud."

Responding to criticism about his private meetings with Mayor Pete Pomeroy, Mr. McLaughlin acknowledged they took place, but emphasized that they were purely for information.

"Yes, I had meetings with the mayor", he admitted, "but I don't see how we could have been flexible or co-operative if we didn't know the conditions".

"It is your mayor's duty", he added, "to reflect and repre-

sent the interests of all the citizens of this town. He never fails to make me aware of my responsibilities as a developer".

Mr. McLaughlin questioned the accuracy of a report by an investment counselling firm that he had been encouraged to believe that through co-operation, council would soon approve the proposed development in Georgetown.

"We had a meeting in the latter part of 1978 with the planning board", he told the audience, "and there should be no doubt that when we left that meeting, there was a new spirit of co-operation, and we had every reason to be encouraged that, through co-operation, we would achieve development in Georgetown".

BOND RATING
 "That", he emphasized, "is what I said to the investment dealer".

Mr. McLaughlin also commented about "the matter of a restored bond rating".

"The matter of Georgetown, in my view", he said, "had nothing to do with our restored bond rating".

What it actually involved, he explained, was an attempted take-over of his company by a major financial group.

In response to pressure applied during the take-over attempt, he said, his company paid out millions to settle virtually all of its bank debts.

"The subject in no way related to proposed development here in Georgetown", he added.

"Georgetown can have a great public park", Mr. McLaughlin said, outlining several attractive proposals which would be among the new changes in the plan.

A better roadway system, including a Mountainview Road valley crossing, would also be part of his plans, he said.

Mr. McLaughlin added that the benefits of his proposed development would be shared with the local business community.

BUILDERS INVOLVED
 "Local builders will have an opportunity to participate by building and marketing homes", he explained. "Local manufacturers will be given every encouragement to locate within the new, prestigious industrial parks which form part of the proposal for development".

The developer ended the speech the same way he began it, on a note of implied friendship.

"I'm going to leave here believing that 97 per cent of the people in this community believe in progress", he said in closing. "Anti-development means anti-people and anti-community".

Those wishing to watch a broadcast of the speech can tune in to Halton Cable at 8 p.m. next Tuesday. It was initially shown Monday.

Misgivings greet 338-home plan

Several councillors have expressed strong misgivings about a proposed development by Relisco Holdings Ltd., which calls for the construction of 338 homes on 85 acres directly south of Highway 7

and east of Trafalgar Road.

The consensus at last week's planning board meeting was that the proposal, referred for a staff report, is in definite need of improvement.

Mayor seeks hydro study

In a letter to Ontario's minister of energy, Mayor Pete Pomeroy has again supported the request for an independent study of the controversial "hydro corridor".

The letter, in which Mayor Pomeroy explained that town council passed the official plan amendment allowing the construction of the 500-kilovolt corridor only at the direction of the Ontario Municipal Board and the Cabinet, went before cabinet last week along with a petition from the Interested Citizens Group (ICG).

Mayor Pomeroy told the Herald that he sent the letter because he felt "hydro's actions over the last four or five years regarding the corridor

have been unacceptable".

He said he had to support the request for an independent study on the corridor because that is what the people of Halton Hills want.

The letter agrees with the ICG that there is no proof the route location along the Fifth Concession is correct or that there is an actual need for the corridor.

The ICG petition asking the Cabinet to rescind the OMB order, has not yet been addressed, according to vice-chairman and spokesman John Minns.

The group, however, remains optimistic that the cabinet will "do the right thing", Mr. Minns said.

"If this development ever receives approval", Coun. Roy Booth commented, "it won't be what you see tonight".

The proposed plan calls for the development to be divided into three phases; sections two and three would be south of the train tracks and section one north of the tracks.

Consulting engineer Bob Cliphsham, who presented the plan, was questioned about the apparent isolation of the development outside urban amenities.

"There appears to be no provision for commercial development, nor any kind of amenities", Coun. Booth noted.

SOME COMMERCIAL
 Mr. Cliphsham responded that, although it had not been indicated in the plan as presented, some provisions would be made for commercial development in sections two and three.

When questioned about the dense forest area in section one north of the tracks, Mr. Cliphsham replied that most of it would be levelled, but some of the trees would be retained in keeping with the character of the area.

"You're going to get deluged with calls when the environmental groups find out", warned Coun. Booth.

Noting an absence of park dedication, Coun. Harry Levy suggested that the forest area would make a good site for a town-owned park.

Coun. Levy also pointed out that the "access road, which extends from Trafalgar Road through sections two and three to a land-locked industrial area, would probably have a lot of industrial traffic which potential homeowners might find unacceptable.

GUN CHARGE REDUCED

A Georgetown man pleaded guilty to a charge of handling a firearm in a careless manner in provincial court in Milton Monday.

Barry Bryant was sentenced to three years probation after pleading guilty to the charge, reduced from the original one of pointing a firearm.

The charge was laid in connection with an incident November 6 when two police officers answering a domestic complaint were greeted at the door by a man carrying a gun. They were ordered to leave the property.

About the Hills

Kinettes need toys

Cut-off date for acceptance of toys by the Kinettes for the Good Neighbour Service will be December 18. This will enable the Kinettes to meet and have time to pack the many bags of toys.

CNIB needs funds

The local chapter of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) is seeking the assistance of Georgetown area residents and business people in meeting its campaign goal so that rehabilitation and services can continue for the 20 blind citizens served in the area. "Unforeseen circumstances" prevented the branch from conducting its planned canvass in October, so that campaign convener Don Jarvie is appealing indirectly to residents for donations. Cash, cheques or money orders payable to the CNIB can be mailed to Mr. Jarvie at 247 Guelph St., Georgetown, Ontario, L7G 4A8.

Thanks, teachers

Since September, three Georgetown high school teachers have worked with students every night after classes and on Sundays to produce the musical "Oliver!" and what a production it was! Much thanks to Mr. Ursel, Ms. Gooding and Mr. Hamilton.

The Reids, two of many pleased parents

Tune in next week

Part 3 of The Herald's History by Richard Ruggle will appear next week. Columnist Gerry Landsborough will also return next week.

Kinsmen will guide seniors on tour of Christmas lights

Feeling particularly proud of your Christmas lights display this year? Then the town's senior citizens want to have a look December 19.

In the first of what organizers hope will become an annual community event, seniors from across Georgetown are being chauffeured on a bus tour of the best Christmas lawn displays which is being arranged by the Georgetown Kinsmen's Club.

Kinsman Bob Malcolmson told The Herald this week he expects to see some 200 seniors board Travelways school buses for the half-hour ride around the community's residential streets, accompanied by Santa Claus himself, pitching in on traffic control for the special

occasion.

Describing the guided tour as a genuine community effort, Mr. Malcolmson explained that Travelways is providing the buses free of charge, the Kinsmen are paying drivers' fees, Halton regional police are expected to provide escort and the Delrex Smoke Shop, Georgetown Kinettes and St. Andrew's Church UCW and choir are pooling efforts to feed, and serve and generally entertain the senior guests upon their return to the United church hall on Mountainview Road following the tour. Carols and a sing-along are planned.

REAL SPIRITS
 On the street where you live, however, is where the real community spirit should e-

merge, according to Mr. Malcolmson, a veteran of similar events in Midland. There, he recalled, homeowners awaiting the buses' arrival would often have special displays and a friendly wave for the passing seniors.

A special Kinsmen committee will be preparing a map of the bus route next week after touring the community this Saturday and Sunday evening.

"We're asking everyone to put their lights on if they want to show some support for the senior citizens," he said adding that the Kinsmen, too, can use some support if residents wish to buy their Christmas tree from the club's lot at Sinclair and Guelph Streets.

Seniors from all four Georgetown residences are being organized for the big tour by co-ordinators in their own buildings. Myrtle Doherty is in charge of Kincoort, Elsie Gibb at the Sargent Road residence, Harry Robertson on Armstrong Avenue and Agnes Dobie at the Centennial apartments.

In addition, any other seniors not residing at the centres are welcome to come along after making arrangements with Mr. Malcolmson at 877-2972.

Individuals or groups interested in sponsoring or participating in the event are invited to contact Mr. Malcolmson before next Wednesday.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE WHEN ST. NICK COMES TO TOWN



More photos inside