

Landbanking suggested

Realtors on tour of town industrial sites



PUTTING PROWESS

Bobby Dezeuw, a grade 2 student at Wrigglesworth Public School, showed off his putting prowess to his father at the Spring Fair held Friday evening at the school. Games, palm reading and a rummage sale were some of the fair's more popular features.

(Herald photo by Stephen Frost)

Real estate brokers from Toronto as well as Halton region will be touring Halton Hills this week to examine potential sites for new industry and commerce, according to the region's business development officer, Bill Marshall.

Part of Halton's new economic staging strategy outlined

for the town's general committee Monday night, the tour can be expected to underline Halton Hills' - and particularly Georgetown's - unfortunate dearth of serviced, industrially zoned land, Mr. Marshall indicated.

To assist the business development office, he added, the town might consider landbank-

ing as a means of making more industrial land readily available to outside investors. Such a move on the town's part, he said, would prove its worth in Acton, where some industrial land is now available but requires a clean-up before potential buyers will consider it.

Mr. Marshall told the committee that establishing new industrial sites on land adjacent to Georgetown in his department's top priority when it comes to Halton Hills. The chief obstacle, however, is the fact that the land's purchase and development costs are too high to make the community competitive with municipalities to the south and east.

HIGH COST

While sewer and water rates and hydro costs in Halton Hills are sufficiently lower than those in neighboring Mississauga and Brampton to attract corporate "shoppers", the shortage of suitable land and its relatively high cost outweigh these attractions, he explained.

In order to be truly competitive, land prices must drop to the level of comparable land in Milton and Guelph, Mr. Marshall said.

Mr. Marshall said the results of a group of surveys on which the economic strategy was based show that the number one need in the next few years in Halton will be the creation of jobs. During the next six

years, 2,100 jobs will be added to the work force.

In looking at the three job areas - primary, manufacturing and service areas - the emphasis should be to encourage manufacturing, since this will create jobs in all areas.

The third priority in the strategy is to bring each of the three corridors through Halton to their maximum potential. Seventy-two per cent of Halton's jobs and people are south of the Queen's Elizabeth Way corridor, he said. The corridors along Highways 401 and 7 have not produced the same results, and in fact, cost the region money since they drain resources out of Halton rather than bringing them in.

Support for companies already established in Halton takes first place in the strategy's attempts to build Halton's industrial base. After that is taken care of, the business development department can look at companies in close proximity to Halton.

Forty per cent of Canada's manufacturing takes place within a 100-mile radius of Halton and 800 companies have been identified within that area which can be approached on behalf of Halton region. Only after these two areas have been firmly established will that department look at the rest of North America or Europe for potential new industries to bring to Halton.



FIRST AID ANTICS

It started out as an innocent family picnic for the "Joneses" but things went astray when Mr. Jones was burned by barbecue starter fluid and the shock gave Grandpa Jones a heart attack. The demonstration was given at the annual inspection of 156 Squadron of the Air Cadets Monday evening to show the cadets' skills in first aid. See page 10 for more photos.

(Herald photo)

Tennis club agreement unwanted?

By STEPHEN FROST
 Herald Staff Writer

The Gordon Alcott Tennis Club was forced to accept its new agreement with the town as a "take it or leave it" proposition, club member Alex Furness charged Monday night.

Dr. Furness told the town's general committee that the club executive exceeded its authority by endorsing the agreement proposed by town recreation director Tom Shepard, whom he said failed to recognize previous agreements between the club and the town.

The new agreement, which council will consider next Monday, asks that the club give the town 50 per cent of all registration fees and pay for 50 per cent of hydro costs at the Alcott arena's four courts during the season.

"The executive tried to negotiate for 50 per cent of the dues up to a maximum of \$2,000," Dr. Furness said. "They also asked that the town pay for the hydro. Mr. Shepard came back to them and said 'no, it was to be 50 per cent across the board for member fees and 50 per cent for the hydro. Take it or leave it.'"

Dr. Furness claimed the rise in membership fees this year was a direct result of the proposed new agreement.

"The executive has raised junior fees from \$5 to \$15, senior fees from \$12.50 to \$25 and family memberships from \$30 to \$45," he said.

Coun. Ross Knechtel said that council instructed the recreation department, under Mr. Shepard's predecessor, to increase fees for all sports facilities.

"This was not just something dreamed up by the rec

departments," Coun. Knechtel said. "Surely your major disagreement is with the tennis club executive, and that is something we can't comment on."

Coun. Russ Miller said that this is the first complaint he has heard from a sports group.

SOME COMPLAINTS

"We had some complaints under (Glen) Gray, the former director," Coun. Miller said, "but since Tom has explained to the different groups the new system, no complaints have come before us. As a matter of fact, we've received a letter from a lady belonging to the Acton Tennis Club, who has the same agreement as you, and she says she's satisfied with the proposed new arrangement."

Coun. Roy Booth asked Dr. Furness if he had in fact heard Mr. Shepard say it was a "take it or leave it" deal.

"No, I heard it from another member," Dr. Furness replied.

"Then it's hearsay, and I don't like people coming before this council making comments based on hearsay that criticize our staff," Coun. Booth said.

"I have never threatened anyone, nor would I," Mr. Shepard said. "If Mr. Furness wants to deal in rumors, that's up to him."

Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson said that she didn't think the new tennis rates were taxing the club members that much.

"There are things that the town has said they will do for the club as a result of the new agreement," Coun. Serjeantson claimed. "However, I do have some question about maintenance for the courts. What's really needed?"

Mr. Shepard acknowledged that there is very little to do other than keep the courts clean, but added that all water and sewage costs to the new clubhouse will be paid by the town.

The tennis club will no longer have to pay for screens or nets, and any major repairs to the new clubhouse will be looked after by the town, according to the new agreement. The town would also cover the insurance on the building.

"Because both clubs are associated with the recreation department now, they are eligible for provincial grants," Mr. Shepard said. "Under the old situation, they wouldn't have been."

FOUR COURTS

"The reason we are asking for 50 per cent of the hydro costs is because under the new agreement, the tennis club will be using all four courts during prime time hours," he explained. "Naturally, during the summer they'll be receiving the benefit of the lights. The town will be happy to reimburse them for the cost of the hydro if there are nights when the club isn't using the courts."

Club president Tony Hull told the committee that he feels the club didn't get the best deal possible, but the executive had voted 5-1 in favor of the agreement.

"We felt that we needed to get the club moving and we had no other options," Mr. Hull said. "I'll admit we ignored club wishes and took matters into our own hands, but there was some pressure on us, and opening day was approaching."

Mr. Shepard said part of the pressure stemmed from the fact that the Acton club had agreed to the terms three weeks previously.

Mr. Shepard told The Herald that the club had set their new rates before he talked to them about the new court charges.

Ex-Actonians for Action watching anti-region efforts

Herald Special

The current furor raised by Oakville and Milton civic leaders over Halton region's alleged failure to meet Queen's Park's expectations has cast a flattering light in the eyes of some observers upon Acton's own semi-official attempt to challenge regional government two years ago.

Peter Papillon, a founding member of the Actonians for Action committee formed in 1978 to try and determine whether succeeding as a community from Halton Hills and the region would benefit Acton, said he wishes Halton's new challengers luck with their aspirations.

"I don't think anyone is happy with the system," he said, "but the whole question is whether it's feasible to get out of it now that the whole thing is so entrenched."

Mr. Papillon recalled that the 18 members of the Actonians group formed three committees and were very careful to keep the "hotheads" out of them. One committee investigated the possibility of getting out of regional government, a second investigated ways of getting a better deal within the existing regional system and a third looked at leaving Halton and joining Wellington County.

"You know which one got the co-operation," he said, "and even they didn't get much. We wanted a review of the system then before we got so locked in we couldn't get out. There were those who said Acton got nothing while Georgetown got everything under Halton Hills. Others kept saying how much better off we were under the region."

"We wanted a review to determine whether we were that hard done by or not, and they said the review would be done after five years. We felt that would be too late. By then we'd be locked in. It was a sore spot that we never did get any answers. Darcy McKeough's assistant (George) Ashe, was a nice man and he listened but he just said 'Yes, boys, everything's fine boys', and nothing ever was done."

Mr. Papillon said he was hoping Waterdown resident Mike Majic would contact him about his petition but so far he has not heard from him.

"We saw it all two years ago. Maybe now's the time to revive our group," he said. "If nothing else, it will keep the politicians on their toes and make them aware that people aren't happy with the system."

Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett said last week that no decision has yet been made as to exactly what sort of question will be put before voters during the municipal elections this fall but it will seek input on changing regional govern-

ment. Mayor Barrett said he has no intention of trying to take the town out of the region completely. He just wants to negotiate a better deal for the towns. Most people in regional government are frustrated, he commented, and he sees parallels now between what the Actonians for Action wanted and what his own council would like to see.

Queen's Park, however, is reticent to admit it made a mistake, Mayor Barrett said. The region has been given a "darn good try" and now it is up to the various towns seeking a better deal to sell their new version of regional government to Queen's Park in such a way that it can't be turned down.

While Mayor Barrett acknowledged there are a number of services, like Halton Centennial Manor, social and family health services, and the board of health which were more efficiently handled at the regional level, he said there are hard services such as care of sewers, water and roads which should never have been moved to the region.

"The county didn't deliver hard services," he said, "and efficiency went out the window when they went to the region. Everything was made to the most expensive level of service rather than geared to the level of service the residents in each town wanted."

Mayor Barrett is also concerned with the millions of dollars which have been ploughed into stabilizing regional government and feels the money would have been better spent in serving the people.

Milton Mayor Don Gordon

asked Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed to introduce a private member's bill in the Legislature which will resolve some of Milton's differences with regional government.

Members of his council have met with intergovernmental affairs minister Tom Wells in search of answers as to whether Milton can get out of the region.

Milton council recently considered passing a resolution

asking Halton-Burlington MPP Julian Reed to introduce a private member's bill in the Legislature which will resolve some of Milton's differences with regional government. Mayor Gordon sees the town's reasons for wanting changes not only as a matter of finance but also as a matter of responsibility. Like Mayor Barrett of Oakville, he would like to see sewers and water returned to local control.

HERALD STAFFERS IN THICK OF THINGS



Trying out the pillory in New Zealand last year, Herald reporter Steve Frost was about to encounter plenty of amusing adventures during his 385-day tour of the world which ended last October. Read all about it in The Herald's new feature series, beginning this week on page B1.



The Herald's brave and courageous sports editor, Mark Clairmont, shows his mettle as he gets his finger pricked at the Red Cross blood clinic held Monday at Holy Cross. (Herald photo)

Georgetown student skips ill-fated bus ride

Betty Milton of Prince Charles Drive in Georgetown received a very special and very important Mother's Day gift Sunday from her 22-year old daughter Charlene: a reassuring phonecall from Florida.

Charlene and her travelling companion, Pat White of Brampton, missed an encounter with tragedy Friday when they twice decided against getting on the same Greyhound touring bus which later plunged 150 feet into Tampa Bay when the bridge it was crossing was struck by a rain-blinded freighter.

The accident Friday lunchtime, which claimed at least 31 lives in all, made international headlines, but fortunate vacationers Pat and Charlene inadvertently slipped up some publicity of their own when reporters discovered their good luck.

"They were unbelievably lucky," Mrs. Milton told The Herald Sunday, shortly after speaking to Charlene on the telephone. "She told me they almost got on that same bus twice Friday."

The girls credit a "guardian angel" and the driver of the bus, who lost his life in the accident, for keeping them off the doomed Greyhound.

special "thankyou, Canada" nationwide tour since April 28, the pair decided to change buses 35-minutes before the crash which killed driver Michael Curtin and nearly 30 passengers. Mr. Curtin had advised the girls in St. Petersburg to catch a later bus which would take them inland and save an hour's travelling time.

"As far as I'm concerned, we had our guardian angel with us," Charlene told a reporter for the Fort Lauderdale News.

Mrs. Milton said she was unsure of the girl's second reason for skipping a ride on the fated bus. Charlene had just completed a social sciences course at McMaster University, and Pat is entering third year at the University of Guelph.

It was Charlene's second call home since news of the accident sent a shockwave through the family Friday. Moments after the noon newscast however, the first reassurance that all was well had Mrs. Milton shedding tears of relief.

"I'd had this gut feeling when we heard about the crash," she recalled. "We hadn't heard from Pat (through Pat's parents) Thursday night like we were supposed to, so I was already

wondering if anything was wrong."

Sunday's second phone call set remaining tensions to rest, Mrs. Milton calmed by Charlene's plans to head home Tuesday (yesterday).

Sunday morning, Mrs. Milton said, Charlene's brother Mark, 19, said to her, "That was awfully close, you know." Sharing his relief are Michael and Myles, also younger than Charlene.

"I can sleep a little better tonight," Mrs. Milton said, expressing her appreciation for the many calls she'd received from friends and acquaintances since the story appeared Sunday in Toronto news media.

Charlene herself was sitting on a Florida park bench with Pat when she overheard two passers-by discussing the crash, only hours after she'd opted to wait for the later bus.

In a telephone interview Sunday, Charlene said the girls wanted a seat to themselves for the ride because they were pretty tired and wanted to stretch out and sleep. Since Mr. Curtin's first bus was crowded, they opted to wait for a second which had to be called out of the barns and didn't leave until around 1 a.m.

Friday morning, they actually boarded the bus which later plunged off the end of the broken span of the bridge into the bay. When the driver saw their ticket, he advised them to take the bus behind his because it would be travelling by an inland route and would shave an hour off their travelling time to Fort Lauderdale.

Charlene said she and Pat were "a little upset Friday and Saturday" but are fine now.

"The shock has pretty well worn off," she said, "but I can't get over all the fuss at home. Mom says she's had about 50 phone calls from the press and all. I can't understand it."

"We just wanted to get to the beach for a tan and some sun, so we took the other bus. We had no premonitions or anything."

Charlene said that although she knew it was raining and thundering, she hadn't realized how bad the storm was during the night.

"I guess we were pretty tired and we slept through it," she said.

The two girls will spend the next couple of days resting and soaking up the sunshine before heading to Port Colborne Sunday to watch a baseball tournament in which their former teammates, Georgetown Royalettes, will be playing.