

Merchants press for civic centre in BIA

Although it agreed that the 29-acre Stevens' estate would be an ideal piece of real estate for the town to own, Georgetown's Business Improvement Area (BIA) told councillors last Thursday that downtown Georgetown is the best place for a new municipal centre.

"The BIA is not oppo-

sed to the acquisition of the Stevens' property or of one central administrative building," BIA chairman David Page told a special council meeting last week. "But we argue that the (centre) belongs downtown."

A municipal centre in downtown Georgetown would have a high pro-

file in the community, Mr. Page commented, and the traditional business area would become the civic and cultural hub of the town.

A downtown site near a large residential area would be more easily accessible to people with limited ways of getting about, he said. The Stevens' property,

Mr. Page pointed out, is not convenient for pedestrians.

ABANDONMENT

He warned that steering away from downtown Georgetown as the possible site of the centre would amount to the "abandonment" of the business core by the town.

Two sites in the down-

town core should be at least investigated, thoroughly, Mr. Page said. One is on a triangle of land flanked by Guelph, Main and Cross Streets and the other is on Mill Street, partially utilizing the Halex Building (the former Georgetown post office).

Mr. Page commented that downtown area is "entitled to more than just a bill paying office."

BIA pointed to a downtown study which, the BIA maintains, stresses the importance of downtown Georgetown as Halton Hills' civic hub.

But Peter Walker, whose consulting firm authored the 1981 studies of the Acton and Georgetown BIAs,

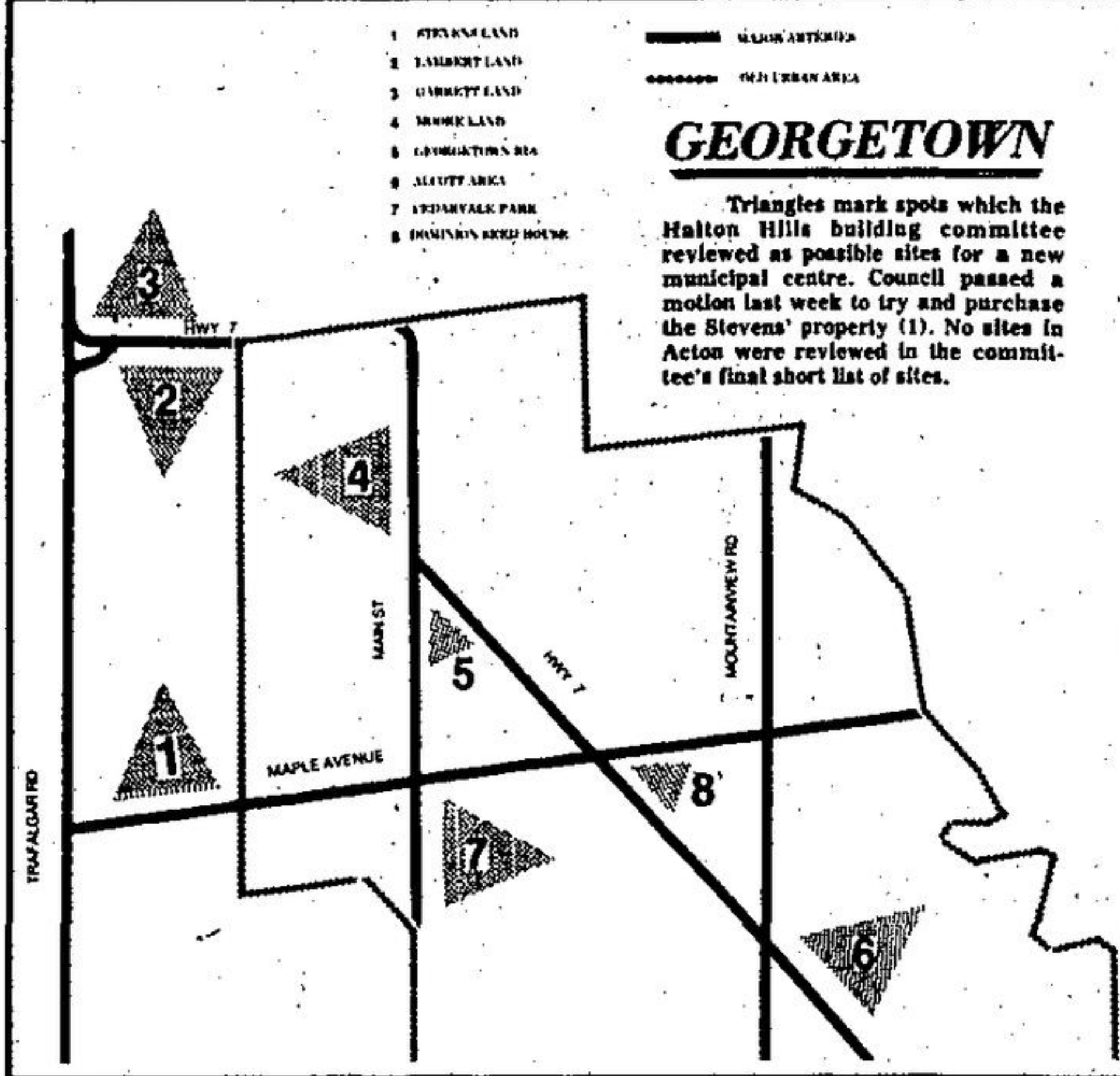
tempered that interpretation by saying downtown Georgetown would be a good location for the centre if it is feasible.

The Walker study's list of suggested policies for Acton and Georgetown says that if downtown Georgetown is not

suitable for the municipal centre, it should be "related closely to the civic centre function..."

Mr. Walker said he thinks buying the Stevens' property and using it for residential development (while saving land for the municipal centre) is a good concept.

The triangular slice of land in downtown Georgetown would be the more preferred site for a centre in downtown Georgetown, he said. The Halex and Hydro site is better suited to a small food-store which was mentioned as a possibility in the Walker study, he said.



GEORGETOWN

Triangles mark spots which the Halton Hills building committee reviewed as possible sites for a new municipal centre. Council passed a motion last week to try and purchase the Stevens' property (1). No sites in Acton were reviewed in the committee's final short list of sites.

Several sites examined

Seven other properties were considered by the town's building committee before it settled on the Paul Stevens' Estate as the most promising site for a municipal centre.

While the additional properties had some positive points, a report from the clerk's department reviewing the decision-making process maintains that the Stevens' property has been strongly favored ever since the town started its quiet evaluation of the possibilities in mid-1981.

In addition to sites in downtown Georgetown and between the police station and Gordon Alcott Arena on Highway 7, the building committee also looked at a site in Cedarvale Park, the Moore property (Carrubers Road and Highway 7), the Lambert property (west end of Georgetown on Highway 7), the Dominion Seed House property and the Garret Property adjacent to the International Bible School on Georgetown's western boundary.

BEST SITE

The clerk's report acknowledges that the

Stevens' estate was "viewed... from the outset as the parcel having the greatest possibility" for a centre because of its closeness to the current clerk's office on Trafalgar Road and a major east-west artery.

Servicing the approximately 30-acre site would not be a problem, the clerk's report maintains, commenting that it would, in fact, pave the way for additional residential development in the area.

While only briefly included in the clerk's report, the site between the police station and the Gordon Alcott arena was rejected because of long-term recreational plans the town has for the property. Mayor Peter Pomeroy told a public meeting last week.

Owned by the town, the 5.6-acre site was favored by the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce in its presentation at the meeting.

The Chamber's Murray Lawton said the property, combined with the arena and tennis courts and a proposed soccer pitch, would make a complete municipal centre. Traffic

problems, he commented would be minimal.

Mayor Pomeroy told the group, mostly businessmen interested in where the municipal centre might go, that the part of the property fronting on Highway 7 would be sold and the money used to acquire more recreational land.

Mayor Pomeroy said that Alcott arena was built with an extra large ice-making plant, in anticipation that the town would one day build its twin. That would put a constraint on parking, he said, stressing the need for keeping the land for recreational use.

A proposal to use land at Cedarvale Park was rejected because of floodplain restrictions and because it would mean "a severe intrusion" in recreational and open space land.

The Garret property poses some servicing problems from a technical and political point of view, the clerk's report notes. Located outside Georgetown's urban boundary, the property cannot be serviced according to Halton's official plan.

Using private water supply and sewage disposal would cost the town an extra \$250,000 to \$300,000 for extra land.

While the 7.39-acre Moore property has advantages from a traffic point of view, it's not well located for all residents of town.

The Lambert property, covering 26-acres has servicing constraints. Dominion Seedhouse at the corner of Guelph, Street and Maple Avenue was not strongly favored either. Owners are not interested in selling and its location is not well-served to many residents, the report says.

Downtown Georgetown, the report says, has a shortage of suitable land for a municipal centre. It may be difficult to get land because it is privately owned and parking is limited.

A number of councillors expressed concern that parking presents a serious restriction to locating the municipal centre downtown.

It has been suggested that the problem might be corrected by building underground parking.

The current concept for the centre calls for at least eight acres of land for the building and parking facilities alone. A centre downtown would have to have more floors than the spread out two-storey structure proposed if the Stevens' property is purchased and eventually used.

HALEX USE

Mr. Page spoke at length of using the Halex Building and the Halton Hills Hydro office as anchors for a larger municipal building.

The post office moved in the mid-1950s, Coun. Mike Armstrong said, because, in a growing Georgetown, it needed a more centralized location and recognized a parking shortage at the old location.

"What makes (the Halex building) more functional 30 years later?" Coun. Armstrong asked.

At last week's meeting and another session it hosted in May, the

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CROSSWORD ANSWER PAGE C6

ACROSS
1. Hoped names
2. D-Day team
3. 18th century
12. Latin word
13. Phil
14. The name
15. Wood or fruit
16. Uncle on Titanic
17. Cloned
18. Amphibian
19. Quaker
20. Prince or hero
21. Archer, E.S.
22. United States
23. Prince or hero
24. Blue eyes
25. Tallest god
26. Mr. Bato
27. Old name
28. Old name
29. Uncle on Titanic
30. British name
31. Precious stone
32. Handicraft
33. Sandy's name
34. Rhapsody
35. Master
36. Damsel
37. Author (ital)

DOWN
1. John Bull's dog
2. Poppy's name
3. 18th century
4. Anger
5. Phil
6. The name
7. Dory, M. Mad
8. Part of a name
9. Legs, Lons. or
10. Lion
11. A - Dange
12. English name
13. Purple (color)
14. Close to
15. Smoked
16. South African
17. Actor
18. Actor
19. Theatrical
20. Actor
21. Actor
22. Actor
23. Actor
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