

# Mold Masters says town won't support affordable homes

By BRIAN MacLEOD  
Herald Special

Some members of town council are not interested in building affordable housing in Halton Hills and the lack of housing is crushing local industries, a local businessman claims.

Jobst Gellert, President of Mold Masters Limited says he is not able to keep a work force because people cannot find affordable housing in Georgetown.

He said his company has plans to expand into West Germany.

"We are moving to Germany because there is no problem with people. We're going somewhere else where we have no problem getting housing," Mr. Gellert said.

"The more time goes by, land grows in value. In the meantime industry is starving for manpower and I'm fed up," he said.

"There is an interest group in

council who does not want development in houses that are reasonably priced," Mr. Gellert said.

Mr. Gellert said he believed allegations made public last week by his Vice President Andrew Kirk. Mayor Russ Miller said at a banquet earlier this year that housing prices are kept high to "keep out the riff raff". Mr. Kirk said.

Mr. Kirk would not respond to Herald inquiries this week asking him to repeat the statement.

Mr. Kirk met with the Mayor Thursday to "smooth things out," according to Mr. Gellert.

"Apparently he (Mr. Kirk) was a little bit on the tipsy side," Mr. Gellert said.

Mayor Russ Miller denied making the "riff raff" comment.

"I spoke to Mr. Kirk and apparently he says that he maybe spoke in private to the reporter," Mr. Miller said.



Russ Miller

"He says he feels very upset about it," the Mayor said.

The mayor blamed the press for the alleged comment.

"Many times I talk off the cuff to reporters on the phone like a friend and I find out that they've got a knife in their hand," the Mayor said.

"He said he had said it in confidence to the reporter with his

Understanding that it wasn't for print," the Mayor said after a telephone conversation with Mr. Kirk.

Meanwhile several local industries say they have found no trouble keeping a work force because of housing in Georgetown.

Spokesman for Varian Canada Inc., Cerco Inc., Curwood Packaging and DRG Stationary say that keeping or increasing their workforce has not been significantly hindered by the cost of housing in the area.

Each of the four companies employ over 100 people.

"We have not had any difficulties that I'm aware of," said Varian Personnel Manager Dennis Foley.

"We can't definitely pinpoint it and say yes it's a problem," said Cerco General Manager Barry Hedley.

Wages are not the problem Mr. Gellert says. With benefits, his company pays "more than most people in town," he said.

Mayor Miller rebuffed Mr. Gellert's claim that council is not interested in development.

The Enterprise subdivision is proof that council is interested in development, the Mayor said.

"If we could get new development some people will move to better housing and release some of these (lower cost homes)," Mr. Miller said.

The Mayor considers affordable housing to be in the neighborhood of

\$125,000 to \$150,000 in Georgetown, asking to come to a development review committee," the Mayor said.

"I think he (Mr. Gellert) should be

## Council can't solve housing crunch

A municipality is limited in ways it can encourage low cost housing, said Region housing co-ordinator Stan Barkovitz.

A municipality can take advantage of a provincial program to encourage low cost housing, Mr. Barkovitz said.

Under the provincial program the municipality sets up a non-profit housing corporation and applies for a housing project. The corporation takes on the mortgages and decides the payments on the houses, Mr. Barkovitz said.

The program is funded by the province.

There are also convert-to-rent programs but that responsibility lies mainly in the hands of private owners, Mr. Barkovitz said.

"The municipality can do relatively little aside from utilizing these programs," he said.

Halton Hills administrator Clerk Joe Simon said the Town has control over three aspects of new housing.

The town controls the zoning policy, the lot levy policy and the level of servicing a new subdivision needs, Mr. Simon said.

The only provincially assisted housing program the Town is involved in right now is a lowrise rehabilitation program, said Deputy Clerk Delmar French.

Density of land up for developments tends to be up to the developer, said Mr. Simon.

"Normally the property owner is the one that takes the initiative to rezone property. A landowner would ask specifically to zone it as high density residential (if they so desired)," Simon said.

Nor has the Town stopped any major developments in the past few years.

While some subdivision proposals have been modified, "there's very little that has not been approved by council," said Town Deputy Planning Director Bruce McLean.

A waiting list at the end of July had 650 people waiting for low cost housing across Halton Region, said Mary Garbes, the Housing Manager at the Halton Housing Authority.

A survey across the region showed that a two-bedroom unit of any kind is the most in demand right now, she said.

The Halton Housing Authority actively campaigns for low-cost housing in the Region, Ms. Garbes said.

"We definitely have a need for subsidized housing. There's no question about that," she said.

## 'Drive-in' portables cause havoc in Acton



School Hits Car - This 1985 Mazda 626 was struck by a portable

Two portables being transported through Acton's Mill Street clipped two cars parked on the street last Tuesday.

Janet Goy, driving a 1985 Mazda 626, had parked her car on Mill Street for a few minutes. Her two children, Jamie, 11 and Jenny, 9 were sitting in the car when it was hit.

Jenny, who was sitting in the

back of the car was shaken, but uninjured, Mrs. Goy said. The portable caught the back of the car, crushing the back window frame, and smashing the window.

Estimated damage is \$6500.

Orland Arnold of RR 4 Cremore had parked his 1976 Mercury Marquis on Mill Street near Frederick Street to stop for lunch. He and his family were on their way to Milton to tour the museum, he said.

Mr. Arnold, who was sitting in the driver's seat, ducked when he saw the portables coming down the road through his rear-view mirror.

"I thought he took the whole side of the car off," he said.

The portable scraped the driver's side of the car and ripped off the side-view mirror. Police estimate the damage at \$4000.

"But the policeman didn't even know if the car can be fixed," Mr. Arnold said.

The driver of the truck has been charged with careless driving.

## Sept. 13 cancer run

Run for Terry Sept. 13 in Georgetown and Acton.

The famous one-legged runner who started the Marathon of Hope in 1980 hasn't been forgotten.

You can help raise money for cancer research by participating at the Georgetown high school track from 8:30 a.m. until noon. The Acton run is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Acton high school. If you can't walk, run, ride, or skateboard, sponsor a participant. For more information, see sports, section B.

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