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Cultural Centre show

Acton artist Mark Kalous, referred to in some quarters as "the Robert Bateman of Halton Hills," premiered his exhibition and sale of works Tuesday night in the Art Gallery at the Halton Hills Cultural Centre, Church Street, Georgetown. Mr. Kalous is concentrating mainly on acrylic painting and the splendour of the outdoors. His love of nature is self-evident in his words, "Nobody could, nobody did and

nobody ever will be able to improve on Mother Nature." Mr. Kalous' exhibition and sale at the Cultural Centre Art Gallery will run until Dec. 16 nightly, from 6-9 p.m. In the photo above, Mr. Kalous discusses a painting of wolves with an art admirer, Ilka Higgins of Rockwood. (Herald photo by Colin Gibson)

Region invites private sector waste proposals

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

The Region will soon accept private sector proposals on how Halton can develop an integrated waste management system.

Halton Council decided Wednesday to accept these proposals despite warnings this could be the wrong approach to take.

Council heard from a representative for Halton-North MPP Noel Duignan, a Halton Hills resident and some council members who maintained no action should be taken until the province has provided specifics on its environmental policy and until the Region has done all it can on its own concerning the 3R's - reduce, reuse and recycle.

To help find ways of diverting 50 per cent of Halton's waste stream by the year 2000, the Region has invited six internationally-based waste management firms to provide proposals that would ensure certain materials would not end up in a dump. The materials include: newspaper, clear glass, colored glass, metal cans, aluminum cans, metal cans, rigid plastics, film plastics and compost from source separated waste. Compost is fertilizer derived from such waste materials as potato peels.

The six companies are WMI Waste Management of Canada, Browning-Ferris Industries, Laidlaw Waste Systems Limited, Niagara Waste Systems Limited, Halton's Recycled Resources Limited and Stinnes Enerco Incorporated.

Regional Chairman Peter Pomeroy defended Halton's considering private sector waste management proposals, explaining Halton will have final say over what, if any waste management proposals, are accepted. The chairman was responding to concerns raised by some Regional councillors that the issue of waste should remain a public rather than private sector concern.

Oakville councillor Kevin Flynn, who sided with the minority of Regional councillors opposing the resolution, said private companies are only interested in making money sometimes at the expense of the public good. The councillor called putting waste management in the hands of the private sector "a dangerous idea."

Coun. Flynn supports the idea Regional council vote to defer the resolution until the provincial government has detailed its environmental policy.

Norma Peterson, a representative for Halton North MPP Noel Duignan also questioned private sector involvement when she appeared before council Wednesday to oppose adoption of the resolution.

On behalf of Mr. Duignan, she expressed concern the private sector would submit proposals advocating Energy from Waste ideas. EFW is a system in which waste is burned to create energy.

Ms. Peterson said EFW didn't correspond with the province's goal to promote reuse, reduction

and recycling programs in that order. Although the province's Minister of Environment didn't say she opposed EFW in her general statement about the province's environment policy last week, said Ms. Peterson, the minister opposes EFW. "Ms. Grier came out against EFW during the election campaign, she told council.

A lot of council members seemed unimpressed, not so much with her request but with the fact that Mr. Duignan wasn't at the meeting himself.

Several councillors along with the Regional Chairman said Mr. Duignan should have made the request in person.

Ms. Peterson said the MPP wanted to attend council, but he had to be at Queen's Park.

Halton Hills Regional Coun. Marilyn Serjeanston was one of several councillors who questioned if Ms. Peterson realized the Region was obligated under law to investigate the possibility of establishing an EFW plant. Coun. Serjeanston asked Ms. Peterson if she wanted the Region to knowingly disobey the law.

"That is not so," replied Ms. Peterson.

Coun. Serjeanston suggested if the province wants the Region not to consider EFW it should introduce the necessary legislation.

Halton Hills resident Diane Vandevalk also appeared before council in opposition to private companies contributing to Halton's waste management system.

Ms. Vandevalk said the Region's Director of Waste Management, John Mackay, told her EFW would be a part of the proposals submitted to the Region. That shows the Region is not putting enough effort into further developing reduction, reuse and recycling techniques, she said.

To further prove her claims, Ms. Vandevalk asked council why it hasn't established the Municipal Regional Waste Management Committee.

In receiving approval for its landfill in Milton almost two years ago, Halton was ordered to establish this committee. The committee's mandate is to develop reuse, reduction and recycling programs, but it's been two years since the order and the committee has yet to meet, said Ms. Vandevalk. Coun. Serjeanston responded by saying the committee is in the process of being established.

Ms. Vandevalk also suggested some of the companies being invited to submit proposals may not be that reputable.

Using newspaper documentation from American publication U.S.A. Today, Ms. Vandevalk claimed charges have been laid against some of the companies for such wrong-doing as price fixing in connection with work the companies are doing in the United States.

Chairman Pomeroy responded by saying "companies should be allowed to make proposals without being subject to slander."

Home buyers market

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

Although some people don't realize it, this is a home buyer's market, say local real estate agents.

"I can't think of a better time to buy a house; it's a classic move-up market, said Gary Brand, broker for National Real Estate Service in Georgetown, during an

interview Tuesday.

Mr. Brand describes the current real estate market as a "move-up market" because those people who wanted to buy a bigger house a year or two ago but couldn't afford it have a better chance to buy that house today. He attributes this opportunity to today's low housing prices.

When asked why the housing market is slow, Mr. Brand said some potential home buyers are waiting for prices to drop further. While saying it's impossible for anyone to know for sure what will happen to house prices in the future, those waiting for prices to continue to drop "may miss the boat." Prices are low now, he said.

According to Damian Nikic, Broker/Owner of Royal City Halton Limited in Acton, house prices have dropped between 10 and 15 per cent from two years ago. That means a small bungalow on Prince Charles which could have been sold for over \$200,000 two years ago is now going for between \$155,000 and \$170,000 depending on the particular house, he explained.

While Mr. Nikic said house prices are close to "bottoming out" he acknowledged the housing market is slow. The broker attributed the market to some people's misconception about the market and Canada Homes Development in Georgetown South.

Some people are living in a "dream world" if they think they can sell their house at the price it would have gone for two years ago, said Mr. Nikic. People must realize houses can only be sold at a price the market will bear, he continued.

As well, people must unders-

tand while the price they get for their house today will be lower than it would have been two years ago, they will have to spend less to buy a similar house today compared to 1988, he said. In this way there is no difference between prices today and two years ago, explained Mr. Nikic.

The significant drop in the prices of the houses located in the Canada Homes Development has meant a loss of potential home buyers, said Mr. Nikic. Few people would buy a 10-or-20 year-old bungalow in Acton or Georgetown when they could buy a brand new similar type house at \$189,000 with a three-year 10.75 per cent mortgage, he explained. "Fortunately, all of these houses have been sold," he said.

David Soal, Broker for Re/Max in Georgetown, said the slowdown in the housing market is a reflection of people's "lack of confidence" in the economy across the country. "I think people are afraid to buy a house because they are afraid they might lose their job," said Mr. Soal.

He also blamed high interest rates but acknowledged they have started to come down.

NRS Real Estate agent Doug Penrice said there is "a lot of money around," but people feel apprehensive about the economy. Mr. Penrice said part of this apprehension is due to a perception problem. News stories describing the economy as being bad dominate the newspapers today and that means people automatically think the economy is bad, he said.

The housing market, however, may be improving.

24
days until
Christmas

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