

Council Briefs

Fishing club offers Silver Creek help

The Georgetown based Izaak Walton Fly Fisherman Club informed Halton Hills Council Monday through a letter it is interested in rehabilitating the part of Silver Creek running through Cedarvale Park.

According to the letter, the group is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of aquatic resources. Local environmental group Protect Our Water Environmental Resources (POWER) and Trout Unlimited support the project, the letter indicates.

Although supportive of the idea, especially because it won't cost the Town any money, Council asked staff to prepare a report

on the viability of such a project.

Province to be approached

Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller told council Monday he will be establishing a meeting with the province to determine if the Town can receive provincial funding to locate a new Acton ambulance station on the same site of the new Acton fire station.

Money for roads

Town council learned Monday the province will provide the Town with \$1.5 million for road construction this year. The Town will receive \$807,700 for basic road construction, \$73,500 for

road resurfacing, \$632,400 for basic road maintenance and \$900 for traffic signal maintenance.

Donations requested

Halton Hills Council Monday referred to the Town Budget Committee a request by the Peel-Dufferin and Halton Regiment of the Lorne Scots for a donation in recognition of the regiment's upcoming 125th anniversary to be celebrated Sept. 13, 14 and 15. Council also referred a similar request by the Halton Regional Police force to Budget Committee. The donation would go towards the administration of a vandalism program to be taught to all Grade 5 students in Halton.

Developers oppose fee increase

By BEN DUMMETT

The Herald

If Halton Regional government thought it could easily approve an increase to its development charges it knows now the opposite is true.

The Region's Administration and Finance Committee Wednesday deferred for at least a week any decision on a proposed development charge increase after hearing five hours worth of presentations from various Halton developers who oppose an increase.

Halton charges developers a fee for both residential and non-residential construction to help cover the services such as roads that need to accompany any new development project.

The developers appearing before committee Wednesday directed their opposition towards the fee increase for commercial and industrial development since the Regional proposed increase for residential development is relatively insignificant. Indeed, for a single home in Acton the charge will increase from \$3,318 to \$4,398 per acre of coverage while in Georgetown the charge will actually drop from \$5,513 per acre to \$5,218 per acre.

These figures are based on the assumption a house will cover 25 per cent of a piece of property.

In comparison, the Region is proposing the non-residential development charge increase

from the current flat rate of \$9,815 per acre to \$25,918 per acre after four years. The new charge assumes that a development project would cover 25 per cent of a piece of property. If the building covers a larger percentage of the property the per acre charge would also increase.

If the charges as presented are approved developers will pay 85 cents per square foot this year, \$1.35 per square foot in 1992, \$1.85 per square foot in 1993 and \$2.38 per square foot in 1994.

Regional staff had originally proposed the final charge be \$2.90 but decreased it in an attempt to appease the development community.

But the developers remain unsatisfied.

At Wednesday's meeting all presented arguments based on the idea the increase is unfair. Unfair because it would create an imbalance between Halton Region and other Region's and locations in the United States.

Staff acknowledged that an analysis it did of municipalities in New York State showed development charges don't exist. Instead, many American municipalities provide incentives for developers who work in their area, staff explained. At the same time, however, staff pointed out these same American cities charge developers and builders an array of taxes that don't exist in Halton.

Several developers appearing before committee members who have already installed sewage and water services on their property in preparation to develop the land said it is unfair they are required to pay the increased charge. Many of them said they wouldn't have taken such action if they had known ahead of time the development charge was to be increased by such a large amount.

The Region is required to implement the increased fees, under the newly introduced New Democratic Party provincial government Development Charges Act.

The legislation's intent is to have developers pay for the services created by their project.

If the proposed increase is adopted, a Regional report indicates 85 per cent of cost of services created by new or expanded development will be covered. The remaining 15 per cent cost will be covered through municipal taxes, according to the report.

The developers, however, said the Regional staff's calculation fails to account for the jobs and other benefits development brings to Halton. If these facts are taken into account, developers said the Region will realize they are already paying their fare share towards the cost of new services.

Following the lengthy presentations, committee voted to hold a special meeting this Wednesday to discuss the points put forth. As well they directed staff to write a report on the comments raised by developers. That report will be presented during the special meeting.

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Fire Calls

Electrical malfunction

Halton Hills firefighters fought a bedroom fire in a Georgetown house Thursday morning. Firefighters were called to a residence on Hawk's Place Street at 8:23 a.m. and found the bedroom on fire. They were able to extinguish the blaze with dry chemicals and never used water hoses. Damage has been estimated at \$3,000 and firefighters say the fire was caused by an electrical malfunction of an extension cord.

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