

Arts and Ideas

Official plan brings hope

"Land Stewardship and Healthy Communities - A Vision for the 90's and Beyond," is the title of the Halton Official Plan Review, that has come into existence through the efforts of our Commissioner of Planning and Development, Rash Mohammed, and the Province of Ontario.

This review gives me great hope that we might be able to reverse the trends that have turned the Greater Toronto Area into a gold mine for land speculators and developers, but into a nightmare of traffic congestion and over-priced luxury housing for everybody else.

One of the key sentences at the beginning of the Halton Official Plan Review is this one: "The scientific evidence is that the environment and earth's resources cannot support the unconstrained industrial societies and their inhabitants' lifestyle in their current form of perpetuity."

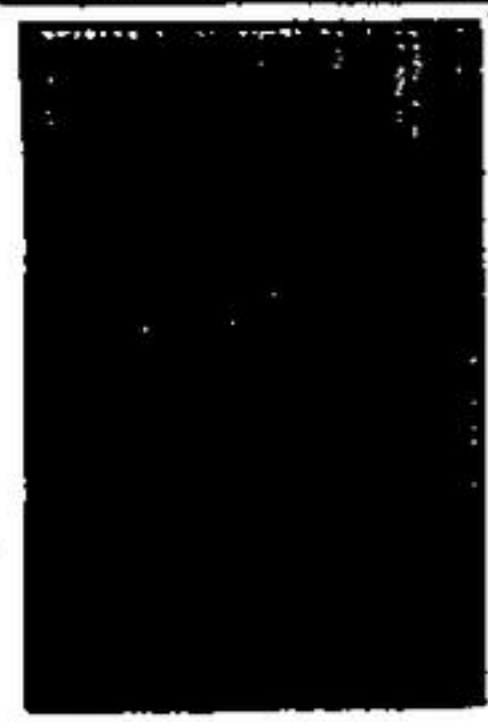
Therefore, the review calls for "sustainable development, development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Later in the Review suggestions are made that, if adopted, will bring about "sustainable development."

The most important of these suggestions are the ones that deal with land-use. At the present time we use, or more to the point, misuse the available land. Irresponsible, to say the least.

Daily, we get reports about terrible famines somewhere in the world, but we here in Ontario cover over our best farmland with suburbs and roads, believing apparently, that the world is a balloon and can be blown to any size.

We have to realize that land speculation is a kind of blackmail, that undermines and,



Ideas and The Arts
by
John Sommer

eventually, destroys the very ideas and concepts on which freedom and democracy are based.

The man or woman who owns property is, by definition, a free person, beholden to no party nor tyrant. The ownership of property bestows independence on the owner.

Land speculation, however, because of the resulting skyrocketing land prices, makes it increasingly impossible for large parts of the poorer population, of a country afflicted with land speculation, to own property. Eventually, more and more land will be owned by fewer and fewer people, and these few, as we can see in Mexico and South America, will rule the country by an Oligarchy, which is a form of government in which power is vested in a dominant class or clique.

The person without property is totally powerless in such a setting. We have to realize that land is not a commodity like any other.

Conceptually, land belongs to air and water. These are the basics that make all life possible and are therefore under the stewardship of all of us. We can own, for some time, a piece of land, for a house or a farm or a factory, but to grab it in order to be able to withhold it, unless an

exorbitant price is paid for it, is, as I said before, a kind of blackmail.

If we continue in this direction, we will create wealth for a few and poverty for most. Our country will be like a tree that is rooting from the bottom up. When the tree falls over, one day in a storm, the rich, who live in its topmost branches, will fall too.

A democracy only works if we are good neighbors, and for that, we have to move together, not apart. We have to live in dense towns, by which I do not mean that we should pile people into towers 10 to 20 floors high.

A dense, livable town is a continuous and delightful townscape with a great variety of house-types intermingled with stores and restaurants, with workplaces and schools, with pedestrian streets and parks and playgrounds.

Ideally, no cars should be needed within such a settlement. Schools and stores and everything else that makes the good life, should be within walking distance to where people live. Public transportation would be feasible in a town like that, and for the health conscious, pleasant bicycle paths would enable them to go about their errands in plenty of fresh air.

The present day growth is the growth of the cancer cell. If we allow the cancer to grow, the days of our great civilization will be counted. It is only common sense, in this situation, to call a halt and to review practices that have slipped out of control.

The Halton Official Plan Review couldn't have come at a better time. This is an election year. Let's make the idea embedded in the Halton Official Plan Review the foundation for all the discussions during the coming election campaign.

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"A HEARTY WELCOME TO ALL"

Writers welcome to join association

Writers are all welcome to join Halton-Peel Branch of the Canadian Authors Association, on April 30th, 1991 at 7 p.m., Oakville Central Library, 120 Navy Street.

Guest speaker, Elizabeth Paddon, a well-known international spiritual life consultant, published poet, counsellor and teacher will present an evening of positive self-awareness for writers.

The program encompasses a series of lectures, a meditation session, personal experiences, and self-help counselling for the attendees.

Paddon, is writing two books, the first entitled "Ghostbusting,"

Illustrators exhibition

Graduates of Sheridan College's Brampton Campus Illustration Program will hold an exhibition of their work April 19-21.

The work of approximately 46 graduating students from both the Technical Illustration and Interpretive Illustration options of the Illustration Program, represents a cross-section of technical and interpretive art. This art will be on display in the Illustration Department, April 19, 7-10 p.m., and April 20 and 21, 12-5 p.m.

Work from the Technical Illustration Option will include cut-away drawings, phantom views, and air-brush work, while examples of Interpretive Illustration Option work will include book, editorial and advertising illustrations.

Included in this show will be drawings, paintings, and design work by Year 1 and 2 students.

Sheridan College's Brampton Campus is located in Brampton at McLaughlin Road and Steeles Avenue. For more information about this event, please call (416) 450-4551. Admission is free.

with a ghost writer and the second, with Annemarie Martens, professional journalist, entitled, "A Spiritual Journey to Love, Truth and Light." The second book is edited and promoted by A.M. Productions, a service-oriented business, based in Oakville, established to "help writers fulfill a dream."

Elizabeth Paddon, originally from Hampshire, England, offers a one-woman entrepreneurial package as a spiritual life consultant. Her expertise ranges from de-hauntings to private readings; from her psychic awareness workshop to spiritual counselling; from readings by mail to party readings; and from lecturing to authorship.

Ten years ago, Paddon's

search for her niche lead to the often controversial yet rewarding career she holds today. Despite many setbacks and turmoil in the early years, she now remains an optimist at heart. She believes, "life is a continuous learning process."

Paddon adds, "being in tune with my spiritual self has helped me to achieve self-love without ego which brought happiness in my life, created balance and an ability to help others. It puts you in touch with personal truth which opens the door to opportunity."

Join us for a night of self-awareness with Elizabeth Paddon. A reminder, non-members are asked to bring \$5.00 for the entry fee.



Exhibit continues

The art exhibition, 'Environments - 3 Women - 3 Views' runs through Monday at the Art Gallery located in the Halton Hills Cultural Centre on Church Street in Georgetown. Last Saturday, two of the artists (pictured above, left to right) Ann Michaelson and Janice Gittings, were on hand to discuss their works with the public. The third artist whose works are on display at the exhibition, Monica Johnston, was unable to be on hand to greet the public as she is presently hard at work in her studio preparing for an upcoming showing of her works scheduled for the Terra Cotta Forge Gallery in early May. (Herald photo by Colin Gibson)

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