

Ratepayer groups objecting to town scheduled meetings

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

An attempt by Halton Hills Planning Department to involve the public on deciding what shape the Town should take is starting off on shaky ground, say representatives from several local ratepayer groups.

Gail Rutherford, President of Residents Active in Development Decisions, (RAIDD) confirmed Monday she has sent a letter to Mayor Russ Miller objecting to the Planning Department's scheduling of the first meeting of the Urban Area Study Steering Committee for this Friday afternoon at the Halton Hills Civic Centre.

In the letter, Ms. Rutherford writes, "We could not believe it when we were told that the first

meeting was scheduled for Friday, June 14 at 2 p.m. in the afternoon! How on earth are members of the public supposed to attend a meeting held in the middle of the working day?"

The letter is also signed by Ken Thorn, Maple Avenue Group; Jan Ferguson, Main Street Concerned Residents; Archie Tannock, Remembrance Park Ratepayers Association; Barbara Halsall, Protect Our Water Environmental Resources; Moya Johnson, University Women's Club; and Ashley Ranson, Silvercreek Valley Conservation.

Ms. Rutherford said she won't be able to attend the afternoon meeting because, as a school teacher, she will be teaching class at the time. She said those who signed the letter had either

indicated to her they were unable to attend the meeting because of the afternoon start time, or they would only be able to attend the meeting, but only with difficulty.

According to a Planning Department report, the Steering Committee will address where in Georgetown and Acton residential and commercial development should happen.

"What's going on here, why are they (the Town) doing this, RAIDD is one of the most active groups in Town, representing between 500 and 1,000 people and we are not going to be there. It makes me wonder about what's happening," said Ms. Rutherford.

Contacted Monday, Planning Department Director Ian Keith said, "there is no conspiracy here."

He pointed out, however, anytime he or Deputy Planner Bruce MacLean attends an evening meeting they are not compensated for that time. "It's a personal sacrifice," he said.

"Our preference is to carry out meetings during the time everyone else does," he said.

The Planning Department will consider scheduling future meetings in the evening if that's the wish the Steering Committee expresses Friday, said Mr. Keith.

The Planning Department secretary said Monday she telephoned 22 representatives of various local ratepayer groups to determine the suitability of the 2 p.m. timeslot.

From that total, two people said they objected to the time slot. The secretary left messages at two other residences and neither of the people had personally responded to the message by press time.

Turner queries GST loot

Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner went head-to-head against his own party Monday during Question Period in Ottawa, and he's hopeful the end result will be reduced taxes for his constituents as well as middle-class Canadians across the country.

Citing earlier comments by the government that Canadians feel over-taxed and the fact the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has so far generated \$400 million more than the government expected, Mr. Turner wanted to know if this extra money would result in lower taxes.

"Since the government is collecting so much more, (from the GST), surely some Canadians can expect some relief in taxes," said Mr. Turner.

The government responded to Mr. Turner's question by saying

taxes will be lowered once the deficit is lowered.

Mr. Turner said he was satisfied with this answer because the government's first priority must be to reduce the deficit.

The deficit is predicted to be \$30.5 billion this year. Next year it should be reduced to \$24 billion, said Mr. Turner.

Asked how low the deficit must be before taxes are decreased, Mr. Turner was vague. He said the government still has two years left in its mandate to reduce taxes.

He went on to explain that the GST has turned out not to be revenue neutral because the government underestimated how much the underground economy would "bubble to the surface" due to the new tax.

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Acton and Georgetown Branches of
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June 17th to 22nd, 1991
to facilitate re-organization and reconstruction.
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We apologize for any inconvenience to our users and trust that the results of the re-organization will be worth the disruption.

NOTICE Of The Annual Meeting Of The Georgetown & District Memorial Arena

The Annual Meeting of the Georgetown & District Memorial Hospital will be held in the Recreation Room on the ground floor of the Bennett health Care Centre at 7:30 p.m. on June 27, 1991. Honorable Life Members and 1991 Members are urged to attend.

A G E N D A

- Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on June 28, 1990.
- Reports.
- Amendments to the By-laws.
- Appointment of Auditors
- 30th Anniversary Presentations
- Other Business
- Election of Directors.

Refreshments will be served following the meeting.

G. Goebelle, F.C.A.
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J. Oliver
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