## Community News

## Increase in developers fees termed 'justified and defensible'

By BEN DUMMETT The Herald

Some developers may oppose proposed increases in the amount they pay the Town of Halton Hills to build, but the figures are fair, said Town Administrator-Clerk Dan Costea during an interview Monday.

According to the Town's Development Charges Policy Report completed by consultants, C.N. Watson and Associates Limited of Toronto, developers should be charged \$5,727 to build a single family house. Developers are currently charged \$3,056.

In the case of non-residential development, the proposed fee is \$1.90 per square foot. Currently no charge exists for industrial and commercial development.

"Some developers may object, but the fees are justified and defensible based on the population and development projections. for the Town over the next 10 years," said Mr. Costea.

Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce General Manager Doug Penrice said business people and developers in Town will probably take issue with these population

development forecasts.

"This is the only area where we can argue with the report's recommendations," he said.

The report recommendations are based on the Town's population reaching 47,850 in 2001 and housing to increase by a total of 4,305 over the next 10 years.

Development fees are paid by the Town to pay for servicing accompanying new development. If these proposed figures are approved then new development will pay for itself, meaning the fees will cover the capital cost to build any needed servicing.

Mr. Penrice said business people and developers may also question whether or not they should be responsible for covering the total cost of all types of servicing accompanying new development.

He remains unconvinced this should happen since existing development, in a lot of cases, will benefit any new servicing put in place.

Mr. Penrice predicted the business and development community will show up in full force

when the report is presented at a public meeting July 23 at the Town Civic Centre.

Mr. Costea said the fees should be increased so a wider number of services that accompany new development can be covered. For example, only a part of the cost to build a new public park is covered under the existing fee structure, but under the proposed schedule the total cost of the park would be covered, he explained.

Asked if the developers would be discouraged from building in Town if the new fees are approved, Mr. Costea said no. He explained other factors such as the long distance between the Town and Highway 401 play a more important role in determining the amount of development that happens in Town,

Mr. Penrice predicted the fee increase may not have an effect on new development, especially commercial and industrial since there has been very little in the past. He's more concerned the increased fees will discourage the existing business community from expanding their operations if the fees are approved.

Chilling out

While others raced back and forth to appointments and shopping centers, Dean Jackson, Georgetown, preferred to relax in the shade with a

Cedarvale Park in good book Saturday at Georgetown. (Herald photo)

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