



Dean George (left) vice-president of Metro Pavement Markings and Harry Reinders, owner of R&M Construction, found out Wednesday the Region has reversed an earlier decision and will now reimburse the two businesses more than \$71,000 they paid for water and wastewater services they can't get in Acton.

Photo by Ted Brown

Region to reimburse Acton firms for 'unfair' water service charges

By **LISA TALLYN**
Staff Writer

Dean George and Harry Reinders are looking forward to a rebate from Halton Region after council voted Wednesday they don't have to pay the \$71,000 they collectively paid for water and wastewater services—services they don't need and can't get—until those services are available.

Halton Region can't currently provide water and wastewater services to the storage buildings the men are constructing in Acton because of the lack of capacity in that community's water system to accommodate growth. Metro Pavement Markings (George is vice-president) was required to pay \$48,128 and R&M Construction (owned by Reinders) paid \$23,000 for the services. It didn't look like the companies were going to get their money back after the Region's Administration and Finance committee turned down their request last week for reimbursement on the development charges.

But yesterday (Wednesday) council voted unanimously to support an amendment by Halton Hills Councilor Jane Fogal that the Region enter into a late payment agreement on the development charges with the companies, giving them five years to make the payments, unless servicing is available,

then they would be due immediately. If services are still not available for their properties in five years, the agreement is to be renewed for another five-year term.

"We're very pleased they reversed their decision," said George. "We wish there was water available."

"I really think the article (in Tuesday's *Independent & Free Press*) made a huge difference. We thank you for that," said George.

"In the end common sense did prevail," said Reinders. "Acton is unique."

He thanked Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, Town council and staff for working "very hard" to get the money reimbursed and Regional council members for being open to the idea.

Fogal said she brought forward the amendment because it was a "question of fairness and common sense."

"In the end it was a victory for common sense," said Fogal, adding if it does set a precedent, it's a good precedent for Acton.

"All Acton can hope to attract are those businesses that don't need water and wastewater services," said Fogal.

Bonnette said, "to take money from people and you can't provide services is simply wrong and unfair."

"This is not chump change. This is serious money to a couple of small businesses," said Bonnette.

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