

Council lays out concerns to transportation minister

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Also discussed was the Halton Peel Boundary Area Transportation Study (HPBATS), a 10-year study process by Halton and Peel and its municipalities on east-west and north-south links. One of its conclusions was a freeway from Hwys. 401/407 through Halton Hills north to Brampton. Bonnette said this freeway mirrors Alternative 4.2 of the Provincial study and the Town suggested that the Province put its money behind this option.

As well, in his follow-up letter, the mayor suggested MTO staff consider the long-range needs (beyond 2031) when deciding on the highway route. By doing so, Alternative 4.4 (direct linkage to Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo) it would "provide a longer term infrastructure solution to support growth by connecting the GTA to urban growth centres in Guelph and K-W", and "for any short-medium long-term needs adopt Alternative 4-2 as the first step."

Other items discussed included:

- The Town's request that the MTO remove the old trees obstructing the view of the illuminated Halton Hills sign on the TransCanada Energy property fronting Hwy. 401.

"That sign is a gateway entrance to this Town," Bonnette said, "but cannot be seen properly because of the old trees, which are on MTO land, blocking it."

Wynne, he said, appeared to be receptive to replacing the trees with shrubs and landscaping the MTO property. Baker added Wynne has directed MTO staff to work with municipal officials to reach a satisfactory solution on this request.



KATHLEEN WYNNE

- While GO Transit's expansion in Georgetown and Acton is good news; it does create an additional concern of train safety with the high-speed commuter trains, said the mayor. The Town requested barrier gates be installed on three roads, prior to implementation of the service at: Eastern Ave., Dublin Line and Third Line (Crewson's Corners).

Baker said, barrier gates are to be installed at the Trafalgar Rd. and Hwy. 7 crossing, and MTO staff, in consultation with municipal authorities, will evaluate the three other locations cited.

- Also on safety, the Town once again requested MTO install traffic lights at the intersection of Hwy. 7 and 22 Sideroad. The Town has been attempting to get traffic lights there since the highway expanded to four lanes about seven years ago.

Baker confirmed Wynne said her staff would re-examine the issue again.

- Activan is funded through the provincial gas tax transfers to the municipality. With ridership climbing dramatically from 2,000 to 2,500, the Town is looking for an expansion of the gas tax for transit programs. Bonnette said, this item was not yet on MTO's radar, "but the seed may have been planted."

"Who knows? There's an election (provincial) coming up (in October) and maybe money will suddenly be found."

- The Town, as part of its environmental agenda, is pushing active transportation (walking and cycling). But the Town does not have enough money to implement their Master Cycling Plan.

"The MTO could be an important partner in delivering the plan and Hwy. 7 is an important link through Acton, Georgetown and Norval," the mayor said.

The Minister complimented the Town for its work and insight on this issue, said Baker, and urged Councilor Jane Fogal, a cycling advocate, to follow up with the MTO policy maker on providing funding for bicycle paths along Hwy. 7.

- Bonnette also reported that Wynne confirmed with the Town that she had not seen any policy change that could lead to the downloading of responsibility of Hwy. 7 to the municipality.



Stanley pays a visit

The Stanley Cup made a special visit to St. Francis of Assisi School Wednesday and while in town it also made a quick stop at Halton Hills Rad and Tire in Georgetown. Steve (left) and John Williams store co-owners, took a few moments to have their picture taken with the trophy, emblematic of supremacy in the National Hockey League.

Photo by Brendon Stevenson

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