

EDITORIAL

with Frances Niblock

Fee waiver request

If only Regional councillors were aware of the huge amount of volunteer time and talents that have gone into rehabilitating the old Acton Town Hall, surely they would waive approximately \$26,000 in Regional Development Charges (DCs) – at least, that’s how Heritage Acton Chair Ron Birrell sees it.

He hopes when members of Halton’s Administration and Finance committee hear of the years of scrimping, saving, fund-raising, grant writing and hands-on hard work next week, it will sway them to waive the DCs, which are charged by the Region, Town and school boards to ensure that development pays its way. The development at the Town Hall Centre includes an addition to house an elevator, Citizens’ Hall and storage.

Heritage Acton was successful in persuading the Town to waive its \$12,220 in DCs, and to write to Halton on its behalf to try to avoid paying the approximately \$26,000 in Regional DCs. Birrell said they will also attempt to get the school boards to waive their DC fees. Birrell will argue that as a not-for-profit group, Heritage Acton should be exempt from the DCs, like churches are. He said the charges are like “government taxing government” because of Heritage Acton were ever to default on its stewardship of the building – which it purchased from the Town for \$1 – the building would revert to Town ownership, and, in effect payment of the DCs would have one level of government taxing another.

Birrell said a suggestion that Heritage Acton pay the DCs and then the Region would make a grant to the group in the same amount is a “shell game,” but one he would accept. Halton has also apparently offered to let heritage Acton pay the DCs over 10 years.

In 1997, the Town was prepared to tear the building down to make way for parking for the firefighters in their adjacent hall, but a small, dedicated group of Acton citizens stepped up and saved the building and have restored it to its former glory.

Now its time for Halton politicians to step up.



THANKS, HAMPER HELPERS: Five local schools donated non-perishable food items to fill hampers provided by the Acton Christmas Hamper Committee. Teams of volunteers sorted the food and packed the large hampers which were distributed on December 17 by another group of volunteers. Thanks to the generosity of our town and the work of our faithful volunteers, we helped to make Christmas happy for 109 local families. –Submitted photo

Letters

Grateful thanks

To the Editor,

The Acton Christmas Hamper Committee sends sincere and heartfelt thanks to the individuals and groups in Acton and surrounding area for their generous support of this year’s Christmas Hamper Program. We especially appreciate the amount of non-perishable food donated by the five local schools (Acton High, Brookville, McKenzie-Smith

Bennett, Robert Little and St. Joseph). Your kindness helped us to provide hampers for 109 families, including more than 130 children. Christmas was much happier for these people because of your thoughtfulness.

Thanks also to the many people who gave their time to sort the donated food, pack the hampers and then distribute them on. We appreciate the help of our

group of faithful volunteers. The spirit of caring and sharing is indeed alive and well here in our town.

Thanks again; we wish you God’s blessings now and in the year ahead.

*Sincerely,
Acton Rotary Club,
Salvation Army Acton Family Services,
Knights of Columbus Acton Council 8050
St. Vincent Charities of St. Joseph, Patron of Canada*

Looking Back

Ten Years Ago

• A fire of undetermined origin did \$75,000 damage to a vacant home on Highway 7, just east of the Acton arena. The house, owned by two Milton women, was under renovation.

• Over 20 local residents attended an organizational meeting to try to establish an Acton museum to preserve Acton artefacts, stories and photos.

• Provincially mandated changes and system upgrades meant an extra \$33 for the average water user in Halton – Regional Council approved a 7.5 per cent increase in the water rate.

Five Years Ago

• The combined Halton property tax increase was 1.3 per cent – that’s \$16.54 more for the typical homeowner – with approval of the budget and business plan by Halton Council.

• Links2Care is among the seven community initiatives that benefited from \$3-million from Halton Region to fight homelessness and eviction prevention.

• Students at St. Joseph Catholic School collected over 10 large bags of toys to be donated to local needy children.

Cold comfort for frigid fido

To the Editor,

On Tuesday, a dog was left in his back yard (probably by the owner’s mistake) and he was barking and yelping for an extended period of time, a few doors down from our house. The temperature was about minus 12, or colder, and we were concerned the dog may be in trouble due to the cold.

We called Animal Services for help and they said they could send an inspector the next day – how great is that – (and) we suggested if they wait until morning, there is

very probable chance the barking will have ceased, as the dog will be deceased.

Getting no satisfaction, we called Halton Police, who also refused to help – not their problem apparently. We even suggested they come out to investigate it as a noise complaint, but they said there was nothing they could do. We determined there was no one home at the residence where the dog was located, and a neighbour actually scaled the fence into the backyard to attend to the dog, and luckily, the backdoor to house had

been left unlocked, and the dog was placed inside his home.

The reason for this letter? As a citizen of Halton Hills, it is now my impression that, if there is a dog in distress, in sub-zero temperatures, it would be up to each individual to take matters into their own hands, even it includes scaling fences into neighbours’ back yards, and entering their dwelling if need be, because, there will be no help coming from any other source.

Thanks to that caring neighbour for sure, as for the services of Halton Hills, thanks for nothing!

*Mike Waugh
Acton, ON*



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