

Region's proposed levies will drive us away, developers warn

By PAUL DORSEY

Designed to make builders help pay for the municipal services their projects require, Halton's new development charges will instead drive business away, councillors were told Wednesday.

Levies being charged on new industrial/commercial development won't just "increase significantly," builder Paul Mondell said, "the impact will be severe."

And developer Campbell Thompson, speaking in part for the Milton Chamber of Commerce, said the new charges represent "a total change of emphasis for taxation in Halton."

Especially for the "dry" industry common in north Halton, he said, proposed service charges "bear no relationship to reality whatsoever."

Thompson termed consultants' recommendations for the proposed development charges policy "very regressive."

The criticism — from five speakers in all at Wednesday night's public meeting on the new policy — prompted councillors to extend a deadline for written comments by 10 days, to Jan. 28.

Regional Treasurer Joe Rinaldo explained there is little leeway for implementing the policy, which the Provincial government's year-old Development Charges Act says must be in place by next November.

In the meantime, Rinaldo said, area developers are "pressuring" the Region to formalize a new policy for the front-end financing of projects, also being revamped in accordance with Provincial legislation.

Both the Georgetown South subdivision of Halton Hills Village Homes Inc. and Oakville's massive Phase 2 development are based on the builders paying money up front for the infrastructure servicing required: schools, police, water and sewer mains, roads, etc., but neither can proceed until the new policy is in place.

The builders who expressed concern about the new development charges agreed that their formal comments can be submitted by Jan. 28 so the policy can be fine-tuned and approved this spring and work can then resume on the front-ending scheme.

Also among the 75 people who attended Wednesday's meeting

were Halton Hills deputy treasurer Grant Usher, deputy planning director Bruce McLean and deputy clerk Delmar French, themselves gearing up for implementation of a development charges policy at the local level and possibly, for the first time here, industrial/commercial lot levies.

Seeing the Regional recommendations for the first time, Usher said he too must sort through the complex report to determine how it will affect the Town. Halton Hills will follow suit in holding a public meeting, he said, and hopes to implement its own policy by next fall. Region staff, councillors and consultant Cam Watson had no immediate answers for the concerns

raised. Both Thompson and Mondell complained about charges being geared to buildings that cover only 25 per cent of their site.

The latter said his high-density project in Oakville represents a density increase two and a half times that of the current use and fears the \$9,815 charge he was to pay will instead rocket to \$306,000.

"I don't know if my land is worth that much," he said. "This Region has got to remain competitive. Free trade has changed the rules of the game significantly — just ask those who've left Halton and moved south. We're no longer just trying to compete with Mississauga, we're competing with Buffalo and Atlanta."



North Halton Association for the Developmentally Handicapped is \$600 richer after Georgetown Globe Productions donated the proceeds from its Gala Night Performance of *Guys and Dolls*, Nov. 15. The funds will be used to improve the ventilation systems in the two bathrooms at the association's Market St. residence. Etta Mills, Executive Producer of Globe Productions (right) made the presentation on location, to Anne Sidebottom, Community Relations Coordinator of NHADH, (centre) and Olga Tavares, full-time residential staff counsellor at the residence.

Two New Year's babies?

By TED BROWN

Although Coltan William Burgan was the first baby born in Halton Hills in 1991, as reported in last

week's issue of the *Halton Hills Weekend*, it was learned recently another Halton Hills baby was born before Coltan.

Evan Nigel Lock was born 15 minutes after midnight, January 2 at Mount Sinai Hospital to parents Jennet and Jurjen Lock of McKinnon Ave. in Georgetown.

Wee Evan wasn't supposed to arrive until the end of February, but mom Jennet had some complications so she was admitted to Peel Memorial Hospital a few weeks before his birth.

When it was discovered the baby was coming early, she was transferred to Mount Sinai, where Evan was born.

Jennet returned home Jan. 8, but Evan must remain in the comfort of his incubator until the end of February. He is to be transferred to Peel Memorial Hospital early next week, making it a little easier for Mom to visit him.

When the Locks moved to Georgetown last April they were the first occupants of the new subdivision, off Mountainview Road S., and have watched as the rest of their neighbors moved into the homes next door.

Jurjen lived in Georgetown years ago, while Jennet is a native of Toronto.

So while Coltan Burgan still holds the honor of being the first baby born in Halton Hills in 1991, Evan is the first baby born to Halton Hills citizens.

Police suspect youths responsible for 11 break-ins

Halton Regional Police believe youths may be responsible for entries into almost a dozen legal and medical offices Monday night.

Sometime after 10:30 p.m., someone entered the Georgetown Professional Building on Sinclair Ave., but police are unsure how the culprits entered the locked building.

Once inside the three storey building, the culprits pried open the doors to 11 offices using some

sort of blunt instrument, police said.

Drawers, cupboards and filing cabinets in many of the offices were ransacked. Apparently the culprits only removed a pair of stereo speakers worth about \$50 and about \$50 from petty cash drawers.

In one office a box of chocolates was eaten and while some of the medical offices contained drug supplies, — for prescriptions — no drugs were stolen, police added.

Three businesses ransacked

Three business were entered after culprits broke into a Queen St., Acton building through the roof.

Sometime Tuesday night culprits entered the lunch room of an investment firm located in the building after crawling through a sub-ceiling.

The culprits then entered the firm's management office, ransacking filing cabinets and stealing an answering machine.

The culprits left the firm by climbing back into the ceiling. They then crawled inside the ceiling into

a hallway. Dropping down they forced open the door to a marketing company causing about \$400 damage.

The culprits then smashed a large hole in the dry wall between the marketing company and an adjoining hair dressing salon.

Inside the salon, the culprits threw hair dye around, ransacked several drawers and removed from the cash drawer an envelope containing \$100 cash.

The culprits then fled the building through a rear door.

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