

Pop drink association gives Region \$50,000 for recycling

By STUART JOHNSTON

The Ontario Soft Drink Association has offered \$50,000 to take some of the financial burden away from Halton's taxpayers for disposing of its plastic pop containers. But this is only the first step in turning such responsibility over to the private sector.

Public Works commissioner Art Leitch explained to regional councillors Wednesday that the \$50,000 subsidy will help defray some of Halton's recycling costs, but it will in no way cover all of them. It is, however, "an important and very significant first step in shifting the cost from the municipal taxpayer," he added.

"We are certainly pleased to see this, but now the Ministry of Environment should investigate the possibility of other waste generators doing the same thing and pick up their share of the cost," he said.

Councillors agreed with the commissioner, and will be pressuring Environment Minister Ruth Grier to ask the industrial and commercial sectors for financial support in recycling their products.

Leitch used Bell Canada as an example of how Halton bears the responsibility and cost of disposing of a private company's products. He noted that every year Bell's telephone books are left in Halton's Blue Boxes for recycling, adding that the full cost is borne by the taxpayer.

"Bell Canada is getting a free ride by not having to pay for their product being diverted from the wastestream," he added. "In the past, we received \$25 per tonne from Bell, but no longer...I would recommend approaching Bell and asking them to pick up the costs. If it is not going to take that approach, then I'm prepared to recommend

that we no longer collect the telephone books."

However, Burlington councillors Barry Quinn and Bob Brechin argued that Bell shouldn't be centered out, because any recycling costs it bears will only be transferred down to its customers.

"This is a good move, it's the direction we need to go, but how can we single out Bell when there are other items that we recycle that we can clearly define where they came from — like liquor bottles and newspapers," Quinn said. "There are two sides to this issue. If we ask Bell for money, then somebody is going to pay somewhere down the line. It will probably turn around and charge its customers \$10 for the telephone books. Let's be realistic."

But, their Burlington colleague, Joyce Savoline, argued against such views, believing that recycling commercial products shouldn't be on the tax bill.

"We must go back to the originator of the product that we're trying to recycle to defray the costs of these materials," she said. "If Bell ends up charging us, then so be it. Then the direct costs of recycling are shown...Recycling is not a cheap business."



Masonic Credit Lodge 219 officers for 1992 were installed recently. Front row, left to right: Bro. Ray Clarke, W. Bro. Scott Gray, Bro. Dirk Scheeringa, Rt. W. Bros. Stewart Steurnal. Second row: W. Bro. Noel Butterworth, W. Bros. Alan Saul, Bro. Chuck LaRose, W. Bro. Ross Barrie, W. Bro. Jim Lilly, W. Bro. Bill MacDonald. Third row: Bro. George Cozens, Bro. Sam Inglis, W. Bro. Jim Bingham, V.W. Bro. Earnest Anderson, W. Bro. Tom Massena. Absent: Bro. Jim Forbes and Bro. Andy McNiely.

Land division committee survives budget debate until year

Halton Region has tentatively decided not to eliminate its Land Division Committee as a way of cutting costs.

Following a brief discussion Wednesday, regional councillors followed Chairman Pete Pomeroy's suggestion that the committee continue, reasoning it is the best available option open to them.

"The process has worked well, so if we are able to absorb its costs into this year's budget, then I'll be willing to support it," Pomeroy said.

In late January, councillors asked the planning commissioner to report back on the pros and cons of eliminating the LDC altogether. They were told that direct savings

of such a move would be around \$15,000, plus another \$26,000 in staff time and other incidentals.

Planning director Pat Murphy added that the LDC has handled 150 applications since its inception in 1989 — six of which were appealed by Regional Council to the Ontario Municipal Board.

In his report Wednesday,

Planning Commissioner Rash Mohammed outlined three alternatives for councillors to consider: let the commissioner handle all LDC applications; appoint four councillors to make the decisions, or keep the LDC as it is.

Most councillors around the table supported the third option.

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