



50th anniversary

Father Leon Baron recently celebrated 50 years in the priesthood with parishioners at Sacre Coeur Church. Father Baron was ordained on June 14, 1942. He has been at Sacre Coeur since 1983 and still serves the local church community.

Photo by BARB STEPHENS

In Halton

Population expected to rise

By WENDY LONG

Special to the Independent/Free Press

The population of the Region of Halton is expected to almost double by the year 2011, a mere 20 years away. And growth pressure is expected to continue after that.

This forecast was revealed by the Halton Urban Structure Review (HUSR) in Tuesday's public meeting at Bishop Reding Secondary School in Milton.

Halton's population in 1991 stood at 313,000 people. Planners estimate that by 2011 those number will rise to between 530,000 to 614,000.

Between 1986 and 1991 alone Halton grew by 41,700 people, or 15 per cent. Halton's growth is inevitable as greater Toronto expands into the next century.

The HUSR was established as a process to plan for new urban areas outside of existing urban centres in light of projected growth. Tuesday's meeting welcomed public input and suggestions without yet providing any lines drawn on maps. Over 70 people appeared to ask questions and voice concerns.

In 1989 Phase One of the HUSR was completed and suggested the vicinity outside of urban Milton as a prime spot for accommodating growth. North Oakville was named as the second priority location.

The first round of public meetings were held in the spring. They focused on the approach to be taken during the HUSR Phase Two.

The conclusions of the Phase One and Progress Report 1 were

presented at Tuesday's meeting, chaired by Halton Hills regional councillor Marilyn Serjeantson. Further considerations for Phase Two were also requested.

Among the main concerns expressed by the public in Phase One are the existing and future water supply of Milton, community design (a large number of people said they do not want to end up like Mississauga or Brampton) and the assurance that natural environmental features, open space and agri-



cultural areas will be conserved.

"We're taking the public through the whole process and getting them involved at the critical stages," said John Fior, acting planning director for the Town of Milton.

But several citizens remained skeptical about planning and how much effect public comment will have.

"If you're not going to build on the Niagara Escarpment, environmentally sensitive areas, streams, valley lands, wetlands or farmland, woodlots, forests and open space what else do you have to build in?" asked one Georgetown resident, basing his question on the list of value areas listed in Progress Report 2.

This citizen suggested fiscal

restraint and development based on economical direction instead of environment. Milton mayor Gord Krantz criticized the suggestion for being "philosophical" and contrary to the Ministry of Environment and other protectionist agencies.

Another Georgetown resident expressed concern that planners for Georgetown are not communicating with regional planners.

Phase Three will be an evaluation of the alternative development concepts expected to be outlined by this fall, and narrowed down to a final recommended concept by Phase Five next winter, according to Hemson consultant Ray Simpson.

The Highway 401 corner of Halton Hills may be affected by regional development, says the HUSR, although until planning concepts are finalized that effect remains ambiguous.

Tuesday's platform included questionnaires provided by Hemson Consulting for public input on key considerations. All comments should be directed to Hemson Consulting Ltd., 30 Patrick St., Suite 1000, Toronto, Ontario, M5T 3A3, or (416) 593-5090. Comments must be received by July 31 to be incorporated into the planning process.

To receive a copy of the questionnaire or Progress Report 2, call Kathy Kieft, Halton Region, at 878-8113 (from Acton 853-0501) ext. 7200.

For more information on the Halton Urban Structure Review, contact David McCleary, Halton Region Planning, (416) 825-6161.

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