

# Halton Hills councillors stall water pipe connection to Croatian Centre

By **STUART JOHNSTON**  
Staff writer

Halton Hills councillors have stalled proceedings to provide a permanent water supply to the Croatian and Cultural Centre south of Georgetown, worried that it might lead to "tremendous pressures for development" sometime down the road.

For the past few years, Peel Region has been pumping water on a "temporary" basis to the Croatian Centre, located on the Halton Hills side of Winston Churchill Blvd., immediately north of Five Sideroad.

But, in order to make the arrangement permanent, and legal, Halton Region must amend its official plan to allow urban servicing on the 160-acre rural property.

That has some local councillors worried it will open the door for massive development throughout the area. Led by councillors Gerald Rennie and Gail Rutherford, council held off commenting about the amendment until they could find out more about the situation.

"It concerns me, while it is a rural area, it almost appears that we may find tremendous pressure on council to change the designation of the property (and allow development)," Rennie said. "We ought to recognize the potential problems we may have in there."

Rennie said he was originally under the assumption that the centre was being fed water through a one-inch pipe from Peel, but now believes it is an eight-inch connection pumping one million gallons per day.

However, in actual fact, both Peel and Halton Region officials confirmed it is a six-inch pipe, capable of pumping 300,000 to 400,000 gallons of water daily, that is servicing the centre, as well as four homes on Brampton's side of Winston Churchill Blvd.

The pipe has been in the ground since 1979 to service those homes along Winston Churchill, and was only extended into the Croatian Centre four years ago after Halton's Health Department declared the property's wells polluted.

The centre is used for recreational and religious purposes, mostly on weekends. Each Sunday the centre attracts approximately 500-600 churchgoers, but on certain weekends up to 5,000 show up for other recreational and social events.

The large volume of people using the property is part of the reason that such a large connection was required, but the primary concern is for safety, according to John Savage from Peel's public works department. He explained in a recent interview that the pipe's oversizing is to provide enough

water flow to the property in the case of fire.

"They have to put in that size for proper fire flow protection," he said.

Halton Hills' senior planner,

Andrew Colley, told the Independent/Free Press recently that the future uses of the Croatian property can be controlled by the municipality, so rampant development will not occur.

He explained that any changes to the property will first have to be sanctioned by the town and region.

Colley will be presenting council with an updated report within the next couple of weeks.



## A hot hand

Acton resident Ron Lewis tried his hand at putting out a fire with an extinguisher at Halton Hills Fire Department in Georgetown Wednesday afternoon. Lewis was among several area residents who attended the session which focused on the different kinds of extinguishers available

and how to use them properly. Participants had a chance to put their knowledge to the test after the training was over by attempting to put out a fire set by the department's district fire prevention officer Bob White.

Photo by LISA TALLYN

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