

Ward 2 candidates debate rural, hamlet issues

By **MELANIE HENNESSEY**
Special to the IFP

Ward 2 Council hopefuls offered up what they'll do to meet the diverse needs of Halton Hills' rural and hamlet communities last week at an all-candidates meeting in Glen Williams.

The session, held on Thursday evening at the Glen Williams Town Hall, saw about 50 local residents turn out to hear from those who want to represent the largest geographical area of Halton Hills.



ROB BOLEYCHUK

Running for the two Ward 2 seats in the October 27 municipal election are incumbent Councillor Bryan Lewis, and challengers Ted Brown, Rob Boleychuk and Philip Lewin.

The four men were sent three questions a week before the meeting and asked to share their prepared answers with the audience.

First, a two-part question was posed regarding how they plan to reconcile the diverse needs of Ward 2 and what sustainability means to them.

For Boleychuk and Brown, holding Town Hall meetings is part of the solution to bring the ward together.

"Having face-to-face discussions is the way

to create an open forum in order to resolve issues," said Boleychuk, noting he would also visit each community in the ward to "take the pulse of every constituent."

Brown pointed out there are many community and church groups in Ward 2 that could serve as a tremendous resource.

"All these groups are a rallying point for local residents, and by connecting with them, one meeting can accomplish a lot more than a one-on-one meeting," he said.

For Lewis, communication and experience are key to meeting the diverse needs of Ward 2 residents.

He listed the vast array of issues he's dealt with in the ward during his 14 years on council, such as addressing concerns about the Toronto Premium Outlets on Steeles Avenue, making rural roads safer by installing street lights where needed and ensuring road maintenance in Glen Williams.

Lewin largely addressed the sustainability side of the question, explaining that to him, part of the word sustainability means local food.

"We have a tremendous sustainable resource in Ward 2 in regard to farmland," he said. "I really want to keep the agricultural community in Ward 2 functioning and happy."

He suggested that new de-

velopment should build up, not out, to preserve green space and farmland.



TED BROWN

Brown said he views sustainability as a form of stewardship, while Boleychuk and Lewis pointed to preserving historic and environmental assets amidst development to keep the community sustainable.

Next, the candidates were asked how much land they feel should be left in its natural state in development plans, citing the old McGowan property located east of Confederation Street and north of Glen Crescent as an example.

For Brown, he said the answer all comes down to common sense.

"We should leave as much of the property in a natural state as is realistically possible," he said.

Boleychuk said natural areas need to be fully protected, explaining his platform is to limit development of any houses in Glen Williams and surrounding areas.

Lewin noted that while we can't say no to development as it's been mandated by the Province, he would like the Town to negotiate proposals on a case-by-case basis when it comes to maintaining natural land.

Existing regulations, bylaws and conservation enforcement policies dictate how much

land can be developed and how much is protected, explained Lewis.

"The need to be aware of the natural features and the restricted or protected areas surrounding natural features will significantly diminish the actual lands that one might think could or should be developed," he said. "It's just not easy to buy a piece of land and grow houses or develop on them."

Lastly, the men were asked a multiple choice question on the development controls that protect Glen Williams' properties from flooding during storms and the spring thaw, having to select whether these controls should be reduced, maintained as they exist today or improved.

Boleychuk spoke in favour of maintaining the controls, while Brown and Lewis said they should be improved to ensure maximum protection. Lewin addressed the question by raising his concerns about climate change and later told the Independent & Free Press "If the situation requires tightening controls, I would not oppose it if the case was justified, but that is speculation at this time."

Ward 2 spans from 32 Sideroad in the north to Hwy. 401 in the south, stretching east to Winston Churchill Boulevard and west to Nassagaweya-Esquesing Townline.



BRYAN LEWIS



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