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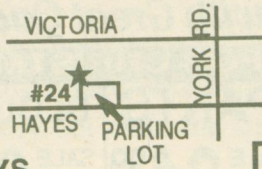
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Marathon meeting puts MVA on hold

Continued from page 1

up with alternative tax proposals and effectively delayed MVA for at least one year.

Three Burlington residents spoke in favor of MVA, basically stating that it puts everyone on the same playing field with 1988 market values used as the base for every property across Halton.

About 80 per cent of the speakers were from Oakville. Burlington had the next highest number of delegations, with Milton and Halton Hills coming up with two each. Oakville residents stand to be hardest hit if the reform goes through.

Georgetown builder and property owner David McNally addressed council, as did Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce president Bob Malcolmson.

"MVA is not a fair tax, it is not a more fair tax; it is a destructive tax," Oakville resident and vice-chair of the Trafalgar Chartwell Residents' Association Elaine Nielsen told council. She charged that MVA is "an unwanted tax" forced on homeowners that will destroy residential neighborhoods and see them fall into the hands of developers. "MVA is a developer's

ticket to ride," she said.

"Not long ago, we were talking about affordable housing, now we're talking about affordable taxes," Nielsen said, recommending that council study the long-term impact of MVA implementation on all four Halton municipalities—Oakville, Burlington, Milton and Halton Hills.

A Burlington resident whose taxes will decrease by \$150 a year if MVA goes ahead told regional council that he opposes the proposed tax scheme.

"MVA is patently unfair," Paul Brophy said. He compared possible implementation of MVA in 1993 to the introduction of GST three years ago. "It's ill-conceived and ill-timed," he said.

A senior citizen and longtime Oakville resident, John Anderson, told council he favors "fair taxation" and regards payment of his taxes as a duty. His property taxes increased from \$2,350 to \$6,552 when MVA was introduced to Oakville a few years ago. If region-wide MVA is implemented, his taxes will rise to over \$10,000, he said.

"I'll always pay my way, but don't you think \$6,000 (for property taxes) is a little steep?" he asked regional councillors. "There are two things I hate. I hate to treat and I hate to be treated."

Many other speakers confronted council with statistics about tax

increases that ranged from 20 to 115 per cent under MVA. Representatives of downtown merchants in Burlington and Oakville warned that MVA will result in more store vacancies and job losses. Hard-pressed merchants simply cannot afford large tax hikes, they argued.

Burlington resident John Mulholland urged council to stand by its September decision to put MVA into effect in 1993 using 1988 market values as the base rate.

"We have had to pay higher than our fair share in Burlington," he said, urging that council correct the "current inequities" now rather than let them continue.

"MVA is a fair system which treats all taxpayers equally," Mulholland said.

"For the good of the Region, I ask you to vote for MVA," Burlington resident and Oakville businessman Gene Wasik said. "An unbiased tax base will help stimulate new business," he stated, after noting that the current system isn't fair because it requires more taxes from new businesses.

Before asking council to vote on his motion for re-consideration, Pomeroy described MVA as "probably the most contentious issue we've dealt with since I've been here."

Locals call MVA unfair

Continued from page 1

zen's committee to look at alternative tax systems.

"MVA is going to create more problems than it is going to solve," he warned.

Speaking on behalf of the 364 members of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, Malcolmson said a one-year deferral of MVA is an appropriate measure to take while other alternatives are studied by a citizen's committee composed of representatives from all Halton municipalities.

"How many people will lose jobs, how many will be added to the welfare rolls" if MVA goes ahead, Malcolmson asked. "I feel MVA is being rushed; there's not enough information," he charged.

Malcolmson also argued that "the timing of the MVA is not right," given the current recession. In Acton, where there is a high rate of unemployment, 86.4 per cent of residential property owners will face a tax increase under MVA, he said.

When regional council turned its attention from the delegations to re-consideration of MVA and a motion to defer the proposal for one year, all five Halton Hills representatives on regional council voted for re-consideration, deferral and the formation of a committee to look at alternative tax proposals.

Councillor Rick Bonnette of Acton first voiced support for re-consideration about six weeks ago. At Wednesday's meeting, he handed over 120 letters of opposition to MVA to the region. All of the letters came from Halton Hills residents, some of whom will receive tax decreases under the proposed tax system but still oppose it, Bonnette told council.

"These letters are from people, not statistics," he told council in reference to lists of statistics compiled by regional treasurer Joe Rinaldo for council's consideration. Like Malcolmson, Bonnette said he feels regional council is "rushing into this decision."



GEORGETOWN MARKETPLACE

First Annual Food & Toy Drive

The merchants and management of Georgetown Marketplace want to help those less fortunate for Christmas.

We need *your* help so *we* can help. By donating unwrapped toys or tin goods to our big truck located by Santa's House in the Mall, you will be helping over 200 children have a happier Christmas.

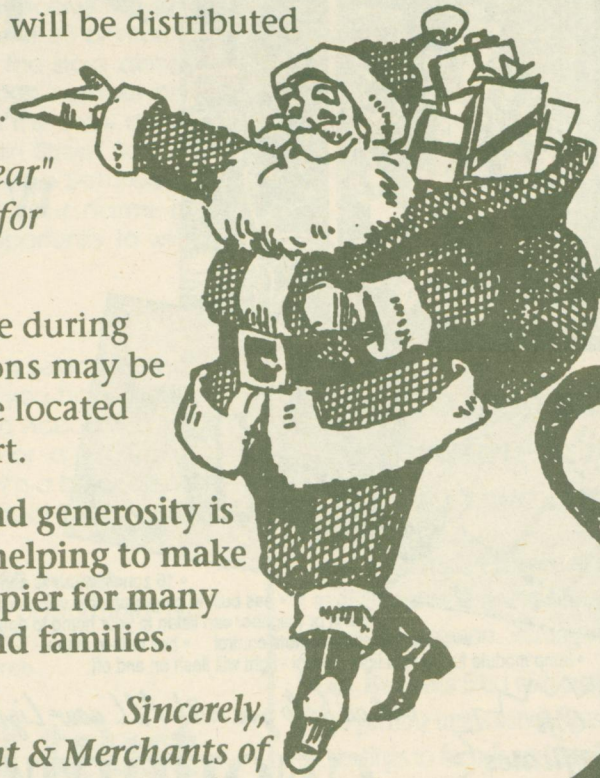
All donated food and toys will be distributed by the officers of the "Love in Christ Food Bank".

Special thanks to "The Bear" at Georgetown Chrysler for the use of the vehicle.

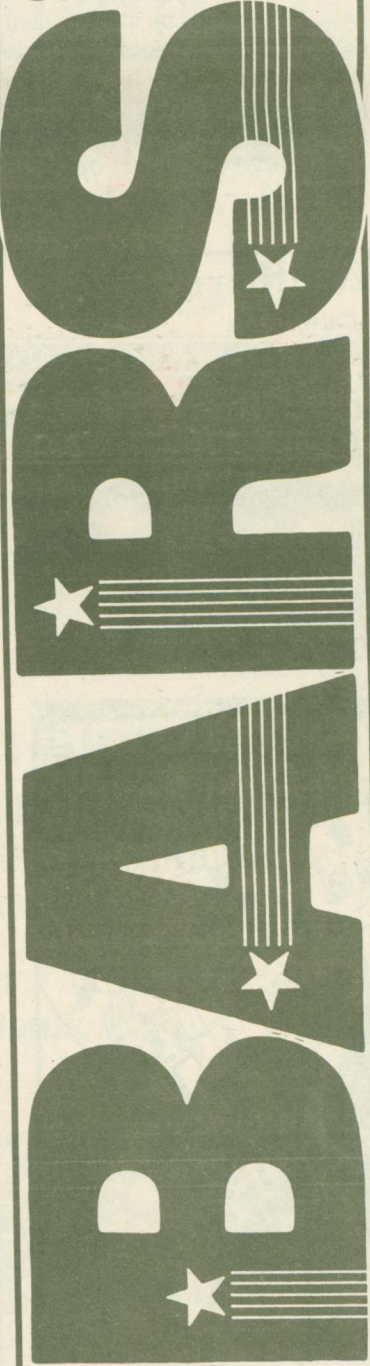
Donations can be made during mall hours. Cash donations may be made at the mall office located by the food court.

Your kind understanding and generosity is appreciated. Thank you for helping to make this Christmas a little happier for many Halton Hills children and families.

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