

Seniors for the Future

Seniors centre is long overdue

By Les Mellish

In view of comments made by representatives of of municipal council that could be misleading, some seniors and the general public, the executive members of the Georgetown & District Seniors Association wish to state clearly and firmly what our attitude was in discussions with the Town concerning the property on Main Street formerly occupied by the Bi-Way store. Also, we wish to make clear what our present position is.

Commencing in January 1992, the Town first offered to us the possibility of the use of this Main Street building as a temporary location for a seniors centre.

Due to circumstances, there were no meaningful discussions around this. Then we were advised that council had excluded any money for this from the budget. However, in May, shortly before our annual general meeting we were asked to poll seniors to find out if the location was acceptable to them as a permanent centre.

This we did at the meeting and after some discussion the members voted strongly to accept the location provided that: Structural and design consideration were appropriate, that suitable renovations were feasible and that financial arrangements were acceptable. In two meetings with the Town in June we made repeated requests for information on renovations and costs.

This information was not available. We believe that in the period from January to June, if the Town was serious about this property being used as a seniors centre, a proper study could have been done and plans and costs could have been made available.

Seniors had a right to know. Their future, their money and the use of their name for government grants was involved. Also, surely the council would wish to know what it was getting; what it would cost; and where the money was to come from before they would approve the purchase and makeover.

During discussions, a dollar figure was ventured to cover purchase cost and basic renovation. Based on this minimal figure, it was obvious that a new facility designed for its proper use would make better use of funds. However, inasmuch as these funds were stated not to be available it was mutually agreed this approach to a centre was not possible. And so the search went back to finding a temporary facility.

The Association executive feels it was being manipulated and as things have transpired, we believe seniors have been used to take the blame for the failure of an attempt by the Town that was to help revitalise the downtown area.

Let us make this absolutely

clear, the prime purpose of the Association is to get a seniors centre. However, if in the process it helps some other situation, that's fine, we'll go along with it so long as the needs of seniors are met. But please, don't just use us.

That is now water under the bridge, and the Main Street building is being used for its proper purpose, a store. Let us move on.

I am sure all right-thinking and fair-minded people will recognize the situation for what it really is. We now have under consideration several possibilities for a temporary location for a seniors centre.

We should say that one that the executive had set its heart upon, the Dominion Gardens may, for one or two reasons, now that we have seen highlights of a proposal that the Town has in its hands, not be acceptable.

Leaving this as it may be, the issue comes down to the fact that we think it is time now for the Town to seriously consider a permanent centre and make specific plans for its realization in the near future.

This Town is not all asphalt, concrete, bricks and mortar, and zoning, - it also has people, in case it had not been noticed. Seniors are a large segment of this population and everyone in the Town expects to be senior one day. Furthermore, there are other needs to be met.

A multi-service centre is needed; a large community hall is needed. If, as the Town suggested, well over a million dollars could have been found to turn the Main Street property into a seniors and multi-service centre, let's really bite the bullet and either build or buy suitable property to house these community services.

Now is the time for council to do itself a favour, seize the opportunity to exercise leadership in this project and get it done.

Since seniors are in the front line of this campaign, it is now time to become more visible and vocal. It is time to remind your representative that you are here and that you expect him/her to work on your behalf.

A seniors centre is long overdue. It is largely the responsibility of the municipality to provide this for its seniors.

This article will be in the hands of the Mayor and all Councillors before you see it in the newspaper. Please follow it with your own letter, or cut this out of the paper, sign your own name across it and send it to Mayor R.T. Miller, Town of Halton Hills, P.O. Box 128, Halton Hills, Ontario. L7G 5G2. Whether you are a senior or not, if you are in favour of a seniors centre, please respond. It now depends on you.

Where there's a will there's a way.



Georgetown hospital received a donation of an automatic portable tourniquet system, worth \$9,700, from the Royal Canadian Legion's Ontario Provincial Command Branches and the Ladies Auxilliary Charitable Foundation. The system restricts blood flow during surgery. From left: Bob McNeilly, president of Georgetown branch 120, Hank Russell, B-7 Zone Commander, Elizabeth McNeilly, president of the Branch 120 Ladies Auxilliary, Pam Sargeant, nursing manager of surgery, and John Oliver, executive director.

Photo by Wendy Long

**THE
CARPET
BARN**

DIVISION OF HALTON FLOOR FASHIONS LTD.

**877-9896
877-1666**

**26 Guelph Street
Georgetown, Ont.**

**The Best in Fitness
at very low cost!**

NEW! Highly Qualified Staff

Ask for our...
Season's Special

RIVERSIDE Spa

*13,000 lbs. of Free Weights
Cardio/Nautilus, Taekwondo
Personal Weight Loss & Fitness Programs
Indoor Pool, Hot Tubs, Saunas, Solar Beds*

MEN & WOMEN	WOMEN ONLY
Hwy. 7 & Winston Churchill 873-9575	Downtown Georgetown 873-9655

**Here's some sound advice
from Halton Hydrant and
Sparky to start the
New Year.**

"Be Fire Free in '93"

Remember, Smoke Alarms Save Lives.

Rite Way AUTO BODY



- * Restorations * Fine Finishes * Courtesy Cars
- * Complete Collision Repair

311 Armstrong Avenue
Georgetown, Ontario

877-8685



A HALTON HILLS THIS WEEK COMMUNITY SERVICE MESSAGE
SPONSORED BY

**HALTON HILLS
INSURANCE BROKERS
ASSOCIATION**

DENNY'S INSURANCE
15 MILL ST. W.,
ACTON, ONT.
853-0150