

Landowners laud report

By Dianne Cornish

A hearing officers' report, sharply critical of the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) and recommending the delegation of escarpment control powers to regional municipalities and counties along the unique landform has been heartily endorsed by the Niagara Escarpment Landowners Coalition (NELC).

The 700-member Coalition has been lobbying for more than a year to have administration of escarpment land use controls by elected regional and county municipal government rather than by an appointed commission.

In an extensive report on the NEC and the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) hearing officers Mary Munro and John McClellan last week supported the NELC's position.

Before development control powers are transferred, the hearing officers suggested all regional and local official plans be brought into conformity with the NEP. "We have received no evidence that municipal implementation of the Plan would lead to its weakening," Munro and McClellan concluded.

When the NEC turns over development control authority, the Commission "can take on fully the crucial roles of monitoring, research and education that cannot be accomplished as well at other levels of government," the report said.

During eight months of public hearings on the review of the NEP which ended last March, several landowners criticized the NEC's administration of the Plan. Many said the Commission was bureaucratic, as well as slow and inconsistent in its decision-making.

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Ruth Scoll (left) and Fran Anthony demonstrate lace weaving on a four-harness loom at the Heritage Handweavers and Spinners Open House, Sunday at Cedarvale Cottage. Photo by Simon Wilson

Halton Hills

THIS WEEK

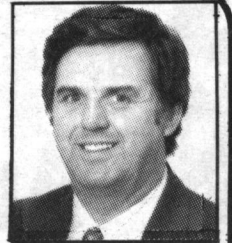
Vol. 1, No. 40

Wednesday, March 31, 1993

24 pages

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Whiting looking to save jobs

By Trish Tervit
Special

School trustee Dave Whiting (Halton Hills wards 1 and 3) has introduced a motion that may save the 75 jobs currently on the cutting table of the Halton Public School Board.

The motion, introduced at last week's board meeting, will be voted on by trustees at the next meeting on April 8.

The motion came after the board laid to rest its 1993 budget with an 11 to 6 vote.

Whiting has proposed using \$500,000 of a \$1.4 million Ministry of Education grant given to help administrators restructure the board and putting it into a fund for early retirement and severance incentives.

"What it will do is get the top end people out of the system now because the people that were going to be laid off are the people at the low end of the system making the low dollars," Whiting said. "Long range, it will save this board a pile of money."

Due to an unexpected windfall from the provincial government, the 1993 mill rate, which should have been near 4 per cent, will actually be 3.4 per cent, or an average increase of \$43 for education taxes per household.

The one million dollars came four days before the budget was set to be approved. The board's admin-

istration had been expecting a provincial funding shortfall of \$4.7 million, but the extra dollars made the shortfall \$3.69 million instead.

School trustees voted unanimously to put the money directly onto the mill rate, giving Halton taxpayers a slight break.

But some staff thought that was a bold and insensitive move in light of the recent campaign by administration to get staff to donate a day's

pay to save 75 colleagues jobs. Education director Bob Williams had explained to staff in early March meetings that the board had to cut one million dollars from the salary accounts, giving the ultimatum of donations or layoffs.

"A lot of people are confused and some of them angry," president of the local Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation Sally

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Water issue erupts

By Dianne Cornish

Mayor Russ Miller wants "an open vote" on the possibility of lake-based water for Georgetown; Councillor Gail Rutherford is "disappointed" by a regional report about a proposed water connection with Peel and Councillor Norm Elliott has "grave concerns" about a recent ministry report which, he says, "basically sounds the death knell for future development in Acton until further notice." All three were reacting Monday night to a regional staff recommendation about a possible Peel water connection.

A meeting will be held at the Civic Centre Monday so regional representatives can answer council's questions about the proposed water link.

The mayor said piped water to Georgetown might result in uncontrolled growth. He and councillor

Al Cook went so far as to suggest if groundwater supplies cannot sustain the town's projected population growth of 40,000 people over the next 20 years, maybe growth should stop or another look should be taken at future development plans for Georgetown.

Councillor Rutherford took aim at regional engineering staff and a Ministry of Environment official who visited town council last fall to speak about water concerns. "We were basically misled" about the quantity of groundwater capacity in Halton Hills, she charged.

The town's Urban Area Review is based on a groundwater system for Halton Hills, Rutherford told council, suggesting that a well-based system carries a measure of controlled growth with it, while a lake-based system might lead to development that is too rapid.

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Dam under review

Council Briefs

Options for the restoration and rehabilitation of the Barber Mill Dam will be discussed at an open house Thursday, 7 p.m. in the Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre, Georgetown.

The dam, located at the bottom of River Drive on the Credit River, Georgetown, was built in 1854 to provide water power for the adjacent mill. The original structure was washed out by flood in 1911 and the current dam was built in 1913. Today, the dam acts as an ice basin to prevent flooding upstream in Glen Williams and downstream in Norval.

Issues to be addressed during the public consultation process include whether the dam will be retained with a bridge deck, whether the head pond will be lowered permanently or whether it'll be retained and a fishway constructed.

Several recreational uses in the area will also be considered in determining the shape of the rehabilitated dam structure.

Water connection

Members of Halton Hills Town Council will be given an opportunity Monday to ask questions about a proposed water connection between Peel Region and Georgetown. The proposal and its implications will be explained to council by two representatives of Halton Region, Ric Robertshaw,

director of engineering services and Pat Murphy, director of development review.

Last week, the region's planning committee endorsed a resolution backing Halton's formal request to Peel for consideration of an interim supply of water from Peel's North Meadowvale Reservoir to Georgetown.

To accommodate questions from town council and allow sufficient time for regional representatives to answer queries, Monday's meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in Council Chambers, at the Civic Centre, Georgetown.

Contracts extended

Town council passed a bylaw Monday authorizing the reappointment of Eugene Callegari and Daniel Mitta as building inspectors for Halton Hills. Previous contracts with the two men, who work under contract for the town, expired Feb. 26 of this year.

Under the new bylaw, their contracts will be extended to the end of 1993. Headline-Purple Cross Month

In response to a request from the Halton Hills Elks Lodge, No. 540, the Town of Halton Hills has proclaimed May as Purple Cross Month for the hearing-impaired and speech-impaired of Ontario.

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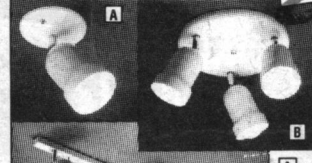
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