Mackenzie battles on with downtown development plans

By Oksana Buhel

After a bit of frowning, fate has smiled on Sandy Mackenzie.

The Georgetown developer has scaled the first stage of development plans for his James and Wesleyan Sts. property.

Town of Halton Hills council voted Monday to approve the rezoning of Mackenzie's

property, despite voiced concern of area residents.

Cheryl Potosky, spokesperson for Remembrance Park area residents agreed with the Urban Review Study Group's decision limiting the density level in the area to 40 units per acre (upa) and a height of six stories. She was disturbed with the town's planning department's recommendation the land be considered "site specific," allowing the limits to be increased to 60 upa and eight stories.

"This was never the intention of the members of the study group," Potosky insist-

She was equally concerned the final form of the proposed building had not been decided on and that neighboring residents would have their public input privileges hindered once the application reached the site planning stage.

Although the site specific aspect of the area suggests 1.5 parking spots be allocated per residential unit, which Mackenzie said he would provide, Potosky suggested the narrowness of the streets would necessitate two spots a practice followed in Mississauga.

She concluded there was more to revitalizing downtown than bringing more resi-

Mackenzie

dents in. She spoke of the "preservation and enhancement of the unique character of existing residential and commercial uses."

Archie Tannock, member of the Urban Area Study Group, also condemned the proposal. "Since our (the study group's) decision, the density has been increased by 50 per cent and the maximum number of stories by 33.3 per cent," he pointed out. "I'm wondering if I've wasted my time on this thing." Tannock urged council to reject the

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application until it is resubmitted with acceptable density and height criteria.

Councillor Rob Heaton agreed "100 per cent" with Tannock.

Councillor Al Cook pointed out Mackenzie's application was submitted before the study was completed and although Tannock agreed, he insisted "two wrongs don't make a right."

Deputy planner Bruce MacLean explained in great detail how the application fit the requirements of the Halton Hills Official Plan, the Halton Hills Land Use Study and the Housing Municipal Statement. "The planning department has no problem with this application," MacLean said.

Councillors Pam Johnston and Anne Currie both agreed with MacLean, but Councillor Marilyn Serjeantson vaguely told council not to concern themselves too much, since "chances are this won't even be built."

Potosky's recommendation that another public meeting be called as more concrete plans are submitted for site plan approval was rejected by mayor Russ Miller because of the cost and by Johnston because of the duplication with public attendance at site plan meetings. (At site plan meetings, only residents in the immediate area are invited to participate).

Heaton suggested the developer pay for the cost.

In a recorded vote, council accepted the rezoning application 11-2, and rejected the proposal for a public meeting.

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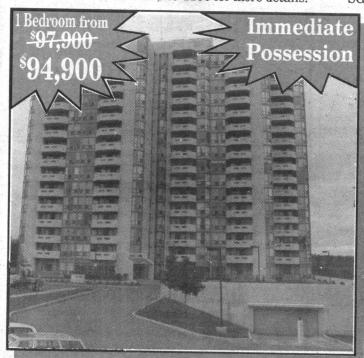
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