

# Opinion

**Halton Hills THIS WEEK**

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## People are the real problem

Praise the Lord and pass the garbage!

There is joy in Halton Hills and neighboring Brampton areas - not to mention the collective sigh of relief that wafted over our local environs not really dissimilar to a massive breaking of wind - with the announcement on Friday of the Interim Waste Authority's choices of landfill sites to service the (GTA) Greater Toronto Area.

Quite naturally, those residents in the designated areas of Caledon East (less than 2 km from Bolton), Vaughan and Durham were slightly less than enthusiastic about the choices of the provincially-mandated authority.

Bruce Reed (a very sincere man I had the pleasure of meeting a short while ago), chair of the Credit Valley Coalition - a group established to battle any landfill site which might threaten the Credit River - was vociferous in his praise of Town of Halton Hills Council Monday evening (and in particular, Mayor Russ Miller and Councillor Kathy Gastle) for their efforts in joining the fray against the nefarious Credit River-threatening dump.

Bully to all of you. And a real pip-pip from this corner.

In all sincerity, congratulations to those involved and concerned about our local worries. It was a job well done.

Those people I've talked to since the IWA decisions on landfill sites were handed down Friday, were equally complimentary to the above-mentioned.

But excuse me please, if I inject a bit of cynicism here - I've been known to do that from time to time, don't you know.

I've also talked to people who view the local back-patting over the IWA site decisions as little more than another example of the NIMBY syndrome. We all know what that is, I'm sure - Not In My Back Yard.

Next step on the road to our local Jericho will be the final resolution on the Acton quarry issue so that no damn dump will get in the way of blocking our view of the wrecking yard in beautiful downtown Limehouse.

Somehow, somewhere along the line, the whole point of the "damn dump" issue has been missed!

"Why can't we ship our garbage up to Kirkland Lake?", people demand. "They want it and jobs will be created!"

Smooth talking, oh green garbage bag mouth, except the problem is, you see, this crap will still be put into the ground (down abandoned mine shafts) and although it might be out of sight (local site) it will still be polluting the earth. Same thing if you truck the stuff south of the border and into the Excited States.

I went through back issues of our paper covering several months and very rarely did we not have at least one environment-related story.

Similarly, I felt we did a good job in covering the recent federal election but the environment never really did become an issue.

Why?, you and I might both ask. Two reasons.

The first being that with the exception of NDP candidate Norma Peterson, none of the others seeking election seemed much interested in the topic - including, it should be noted, newly-elected Liberal MP Julian Reed and defeated PCer Garth Turner.

Sure, they both paid lip-service to the topic but that was it. Also, it should be noted, few of those who attended the audience-stacked all-candidates' meetings cared to discuss the environment.

The second reason, locally, is that we have a fair number of environmental groups who really have ticked-off people with their basically self-serving antics. They talk a good line, but then the line goes dead when it comes time to producing any meaningful results of their gab-fests.

People produce garbage - always have and always will.

You can knock Bob Rae and the NDP, but the fact remains, Ontario has become the most environmentally-conscious province in Canada.

People are the problem. And until a conscious effort is made by individuals to singly care for and protect our environment, all the talk in the world will amount to little more than verbal diarrhea.

Colin Gibson

## The People's Corner

# Only the face of change is opposed

**To the Editor:**

Re: Decision is breath of fresh air. Printed Oct. 27.

I have just finished reading this letter and feel I must sit down and write a response to set the record straight. I shall cover the nine points of David McNally's letter in the order in which he made them.

1) None of the five speakers who stood to oppose this application expressed the slightest disregard for business or disputed the need for a healthy business community in Georgetown. Nor did either of the opposing letters which were read into the minutes of the meeting. All of the groups who have opposed this application have consistently stated their support for the Downtown business community and recognized the need for development in the Downtown core to support it. Indeed, one of those who spoke to have a lost letter entered into Council records is planning to open a business in the Downtown. The point which David did not state and which council did not acknowledge, is that the application was not an all or nothing proposition. All of these opposed agreed that this site is an excellent one for apartment type development but stressed that it should be development on a human scale, compatible with the existing architecture of the surrounding area. All of the speakers representing groups also said that they would not have opposed an application for a six storey building with a density of 40 units per acre, rather than the 60 units per acre and eight storeys in the application.

2) This project was first initiated over three years ago with a simple application and a drawing of the proposed building. The proposal has since been revised on two occasions, each time with a new drawing. In the meantime, the town has

## Thanks for the help

**To the Editor:**

The Georgetown Major Novice Raiders would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your assistance with our fundraiser. Also to thank you for the publicity regarding the onset of our raffle.

The raffle tickets are now in full swing and are selling quickly.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Thanks again.

**Georgetown Major Novice Raiders**

gone through the long and drawn-out development and adoption of sweeping amendments to it's Official Plan. One of the deficiencies in the old plan which the Urban Area Review Committee, the consultants and Town Planners specifically addressed was the issue of the need to control the scale and extent of re-development in existing built-up areas, including the Downtown. The solution for the Downtown core which was arrived at was to designate the area for development at a density of 40 units per acre and a building height of six storeys, as a right of land owners. A separate clause of the Plan, added by Town Council, allows Council to consider granting densities up to 60 units per acre and building heights up to eight storeys. The original application and each revision has been for maximum possible density and height.

3) The speakers and letters argued that a major part of the attraction of the Downtown is the character and charm of the area. An eight storey building will dominate the three and four storey structures on Main Street, not to mention the single family homes on one other side of the site. Furthermore, this is the first application to come before council since it adopted the Official Plan amendments and it was repeatedly pointed out that approving this application would open the way for the owners of at least three other Downtown sites to make the same demands of this and future councils.

4) This point is absolutely correct and the amendments to the Official Plan were developed to do exactly that,

without the need for eight storey buildings at 60 units per acre density.

5) I attended council that evening and spoke against the proposal and I did not hear a single speaker or letter say or even hint that builders make their living out of greed. It was pointed out that this application has constantly been for the maximum possible density despite continued and long standing concerns from many.

6) That evening council certainly did choose to ignore both these who took the time to write letters on the issue and the presentations of five people, some of whom were representing themselves, others representing the more than 120 who signed a petition against the application, or the University Women's Club or R.A.I.D.D., an organization formed directly because of the actions of one out-of-town developer who is attempting to exploit a single family residential neighborhood by building a 199 unit development on three adjacent lots along Maple Avenue. The week before at General Committee council also listened to the arguments of two delegations opposed to the application. I do not know how the public can make themselves more noticeable than by making a presentation before council.

And yet the vote was 10-3 in favor of the application.

7) It is interesting that David feels that those who took the time and made the effort to appear before council have their own selfish desires at heart. Not one of those who spoke on either evening stands to make any financial gain from this project, whatever its scale. All of these people feel the need to speak out in defense of the Georgetown they know and choose to live in. The special interest of this group of people is Georgetown, and most have spent many, many hours serving on committees were even established at the request of town council.

8) I agree with David that this project will not be salvation of Downtown. I think that the letter which was read into the minutes did a fine job of putting that issue into focus. (It might be worth finding a copy of the Halton Cable Systems broadcast of the meeting to hear it.)

9) The local home owners and all those who have met to consider and contribute to the planning of Georgetown are not opposed to change. We are concerned about the face of that change and do not agree that it must be either eight storeys high or not at all.

**Ken Thorn  
Chair, R.A.I.D.D.  
Georgetown.**

## Got a beef or a comment?

Halton Hills This Week welcomes your letters. Letters must be signed and include your full name and address. Names will be withheld on request. Halton Hills This Week reserves the right to edit, revise, or reject any letters on the basis of factual errors, punctuation, spelling errors or as a result of space limitations.

**Send your letters to: The Editor, Halton Hills This Week, 232 Guelph St., Unit 9, Georgetown, ON, L7G 4B1 or fax to: 905-873-3918**

