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"ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED"

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 1994

'Still a will' to build new rink

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Norm Elliott has a message for anyone who feels the Town is sitting on its hands concerning the plans for a new arena complex in Acton East: "It couldn't be further from the truth."

The Acton councillor's statement on Friday came on the heels of the announcement by general committee at last Monday's council meeting that the arena would not be one of the projects as part of the Canada-Ontario Infrastructure Works Program.

The decision to leave the arena off the program, which is intended to create jobs in Halton Hills, is irrelevant, said Elliott.

"The only conceivable explanation (to having it on the list) without land acquisition and zoning would be to demolish the existing arena and build on the Prospect Park site," he said.

"But that's something the public is not prepared to do and both myself and the two other Acton councillors, Gerald Rennie and Rick Bonnette, have maintained the proper location for an arena is not in Prospect Park. It's not an area for an expanded facility because the site is already congested."

Town treasurer Andy Koopmans said on Friday the timing of other development projects, the cost associated with services to the arena property and the time constraints for projects in the infrastructure program to be complete, were the reasons to leave the arena off the infrastructure list.

Infrastructure projects are to be 85 per cent complete by March 1996. Koopmans stated the arena project wasn't an easy decision

for council, but they felt it was the best one at this time.

Koopmans said that the construction portion of the arena project will be deferred in the capital budget the Town is preparing for 1995 through 2004.

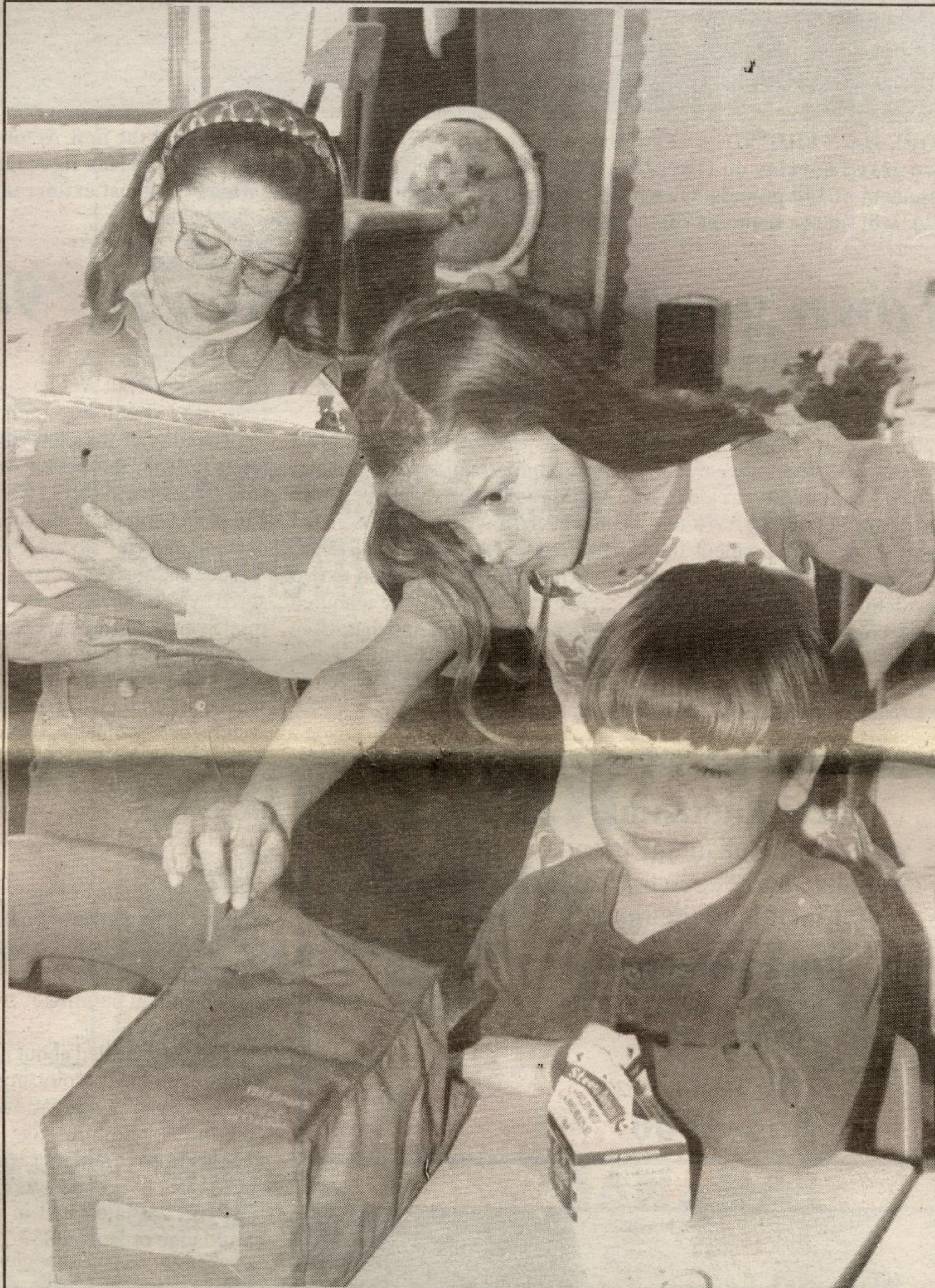
And the acquisition of land for the arena and the accompanying study works will be reflected in the Town's 1994 budget.

Elliott said land negotiations with Rinarin Developments should be complete in the next 30 to 45 days. He pointed out the demolition of the current arena would mean the loss of one complete ice season and a serious step would have to be taken to re-schedule minor hockey games and ice time for the Acton Figure Skating Club.

Koopmans said the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearings — which started again on Monday — has added a new twist and served effectively in further delaying constructing the arena.

"While the Town is committed to the construction of the Acton arena, it doesn't want to bear all the costs," said Koopmans, who noted the arena would have taken the entire \$1,713,022 from the infrastructure program given to the Town by the federal and provincial governments.

"But there is still a will to go ahead with construction."



LITTERLESS LUNCH-TIME!

Michael Brooks, 10, doesn't appear too worried as "Inspector" Kimberley Freeland checks out his lunch bag Thursday during M.Z. Bennett's Litterless Lunch Week. The exercise gave students an education in the importance of reducing lunch-time waste through the use of reusable, recyclable food containers. Kristi Haggett records the data. (Doug Harrison photo)

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