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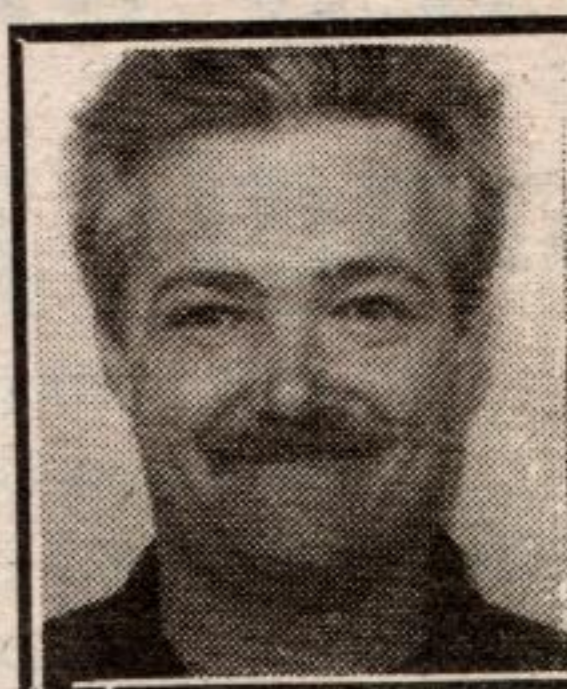
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Acton reps want local control for social services

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
 The Acton Tanner

The future of long-term care for the disabled and seniors in Acton could be impacted, as MPPs look at legislation that would re-organize and streamline organizations like Acton Support Services and Information Centre (ASSIC).

One of the major changes being suggested in a debate at Queen's Park is the formation of Multi-Service Agencies (MSA) to provide a single source to a variety of community-based services.

Last Monday night Halton Hills Council lent its support to the Halton Hills MSA Committee, which is lobbying for local, not Regional, control of the long-term care services.

Council will tell the Halton District Health Council that long-term care must be controlled locally by a Halton Hills Board of Directors and not a Regional group.

Current proposals state there would be one MSA for Halton and that does not sit well with Halton Hills MSA member Peggy Balkind, executive director of ASSIC.

"We are very much in agreement with the concept of MSAs," Balkind said on Friday, "but it has to be locally controlled and that's where the concern is.

"ASSIC already provides one-stop-shopping for seniors and disabled services and we don't want to lose any of the other services we have because they work so well for our community."

Balkind said there are figures showing that Acton and the north of Halton receive half of the professional home care services offered to seniors and disabled in the rest of Halton.

"We don't get our fair share

because Home Care, the Red Cross and VON (Victoria Order of Nurses) are run out of the south," Balkind explained.

"Basing it on history, we are saying that having long term care run by a Regional MSA would mean Acton would get even less.

"The north has 11 per cent of the Regional population but gets only 7 per cent of the dollars spent on long-term care.

"We want our full share. Why should we settle for half?"

During the Council discussion Acton Councillor Norm Elliott agreed local service is best.

"I don't want to give the impression that a certain amount of compassion is lost when control goes to the Region, but in reality that is what happens," Elliott said.

"The Region, perhaps, does not see these individuals at the personal level that the local community does."

Councillor Gerald Rennie questioned who would control the money for Seniors Centres, but all staff could report was that funding is a "little bit of a mystery" and that there is no crystal ball to determine what the Province would and would not fund.

At its meeting on Nov. 9, the Halton District Health Council is expected to approve plans for a Regional MSA. Balkind urges Acton residents to attend that meeting and voice their concerns.



ACTON'S BEST!

On Saturday, 13 of Acton's volunteer firefighters were honoured at a retirement dinner at the fire hall. Back row, from left: Bill Spielvogel (32 years), John Vanderbrink (25 years) and 10-year firefighter George Artem. Front row: Jim Thornhill (29 years), Bruce Fowler (11 years) Kevin Newby (two years), Gary Pickles (nine years) and John Dunn (27 years). (Lori Frechette photo)

Rural subdivision approved

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
 The Acton Tanner

There will not be a commercial component to the Molinaro rural subdivision on the eastern outskirts of Acton.

Halton Hills Council has approved a drastically down-sized, 13-lot subdivision in the Hwy. 7 and Fourth Line Bannochburn rural cluster. Approval of the plan will short-circuit an Ontario Municipal Board hearing on the abandoned 25 lot and commercial development plan.

The original plan called for 25 lots and two commercial blocks fronting on Hwy. 7, but Town staff rejected the commercial development based on Council's previous approval of a 9,900 square foot hardware store in the area.

Noting that the development was not an estate subdivision, but a small expansion of the existing rural cluster, Molinaro agent Gordon Driedger told Councillors that there is no neighbour opposition to the revised plan.

"The public generally, and

neighbours specifically, do not object to this development proposal," Driedger said.

"People living in the rural clusters expect some low level of development. They do not view the development as an intrusion to their rural lifestyle," Driedger said.

Town staff said the Molinaro development is supported by the existing development pattern in the area, including the approved Acton Holdings 17-lot subdivision opposite the Molinaro land and on the north side of Hwy. 7.

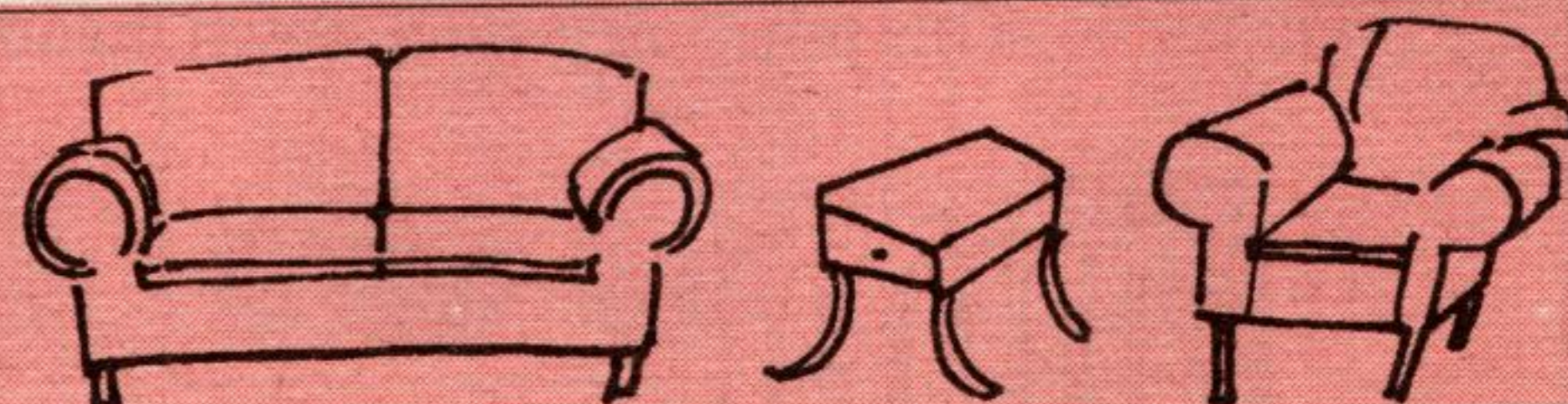
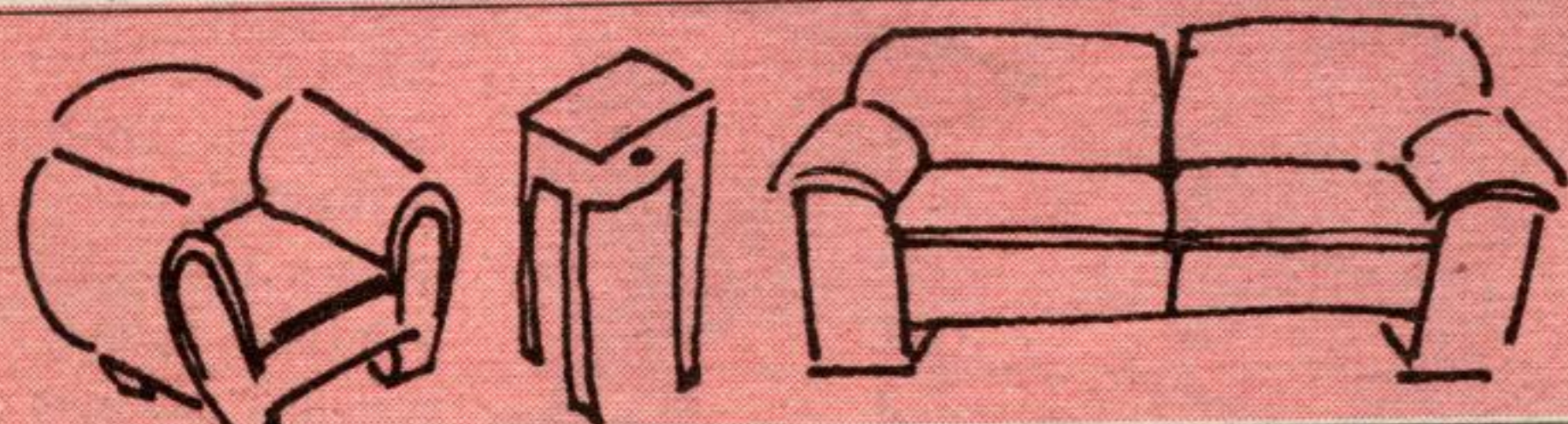
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