

New Mill Town housing will help single parents, unemployed

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Realizing that provincial funding might freeze up after the November election, a local non-profit housing group has bit the bullet. They are risking negative results from Acton's water study in an attempt to get 40 "affordable and much-needed" units in town.

Local MPP Noel Duignan recently made an announcement that Halton Hills would be the beneficiary of 140 units of non-profit housing, 40 of which will be built in Acton under the jobsOntario Homes program.

"I'm quite excited about it," said Phil White, chair of the Acton committee Mill Town Co-operative Homes Inc. "We're stressing the need for affordable single units and more four-bedroom apartments. There's only one apartment

building in town, on Maria Street, that offers three bedroom units."

White says with today's high cost of living, some people are paying 60 to 80 per cent of their incomes on housing. With a subsidy for these new units, one may only pay 25 per cent for housing costs.

"It will be great for single moms and for the unemployed," said White, who has chaired the committee for three years. "Jobs aren't paying what they used to. The percentage of teen moms, seniors and other families in need is so high. People who normally would have to go out of the community can now stay here."

You don't need to live here to qualify, but White stresses "we're helping Actonites first. Our needs and demands are focused in town."

White, an Acton resident himself, says the units will be geared to income, but there will also be market-value units for people who earn too much to benefit from the subsidy that the Provincial government offers.

A 12-member co-op committee will interview applicants before making their decision.

Mill Town is choosing an architect and is in the site-selection process. White hopes they can find a site downtown, "so people aren't bound with having a vehicle."



PHIL WHITE

White, though, is in the same boat as many others waiting to hear the result of the water study on Fairy Lake, the study that will determine the fate of future development in Acton.

"It (the pending decision) is a concern, but we feel development can't be held up forever. We honestly believe it can be rectified on its own. We'll work around it."

White said a "No" decision from the water study could possibly see the three to four-year project turned down. But he's optimistic there won't be a problem and said the group felt it necessary to pursue the housing, since there might not be much provincial funding following the November election.

"The provincial government is well-aware of Acton's water situation and by virtue of their allocation to us, it seems it's a hurdle we can straddle."

Statistics from a letter distributed by the Halton Housing Coalition indicate that 604 people between 16 and 64 approached agencies for affordable housing in 1993. The letter also stated that 37 per cent of North-Halton housing registry applicants live in this area.

Readers interested in applying for housing can write: Mill Town Co-op Homes Inc., P.O. Box 479, Acton, Ont., L7J 2M6.

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NEWS SHORTS

Scout-Guide food drive Saturday

On Saturday, Acton residents and businesses will be asked to help feed the hungry by donating food in the annual Scout and Guide Food Drive.

Organizers hope to gather enough non-perishable high-protein food to stock the shelves at Acton FoodShare. Scouts, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Sparks, Calvinist Crusaders and their leaders will knock on doors in Acton and surrounding areas between 9:30 am and 2 pm.

The most needed food items are baby foods, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, breakfast cereals, pasta, rice, spaghetti sauce, tuna, canned fruits and vegetables and soups.

The drop-off location is the Scout Hall on School Lane.

Rash of stolen autos in Acton

A rash of stolen vehicles last week has Halton Regional Police looking for a local car thief.

Overnight Thursday a red GMC pickup truck was stolen from a Churchill Road South home. The truck, valued at approximately \$15,000, was locked at the time of its theft.

A Maria Street apartment building parking lot was the scene of a second theft overnight on Friday. A blue 1994 Harley Davidson motorcycle was stolen and has not yet been recovered. The bike was valued at \$21,000.

Also on Friday a 1986 Ford pickup truck was taken from its parking spot at a Mill Street West home. The truck was later discovered abandoned in the middle of a rural field.

Staff sergeant Ron Welsh reported yesterday that the Halton Regional Police were continuing to investigate all three thefts. He advised Acton residents to ensure car doors are locked when parked for even short lengths of time.

Pranksters paint at Acton High

Someone spray-painted graffiti on a storage shed and the front windows at Acton High on Sunday night around 11 pm. The vandals caused \$500 to the Cedar Road school.

Police are investigating the incident.

Weekend fires downtown

Fire fighters extinguished a pair of fires before any real damage was caused on the weekend.

Shortly after 7 pm on Friday night a pile of leaves was set ablaze on Frederick Street, then just past 9 on Saturday night another pile of leaves was set on fire in a ditch on Brock Street.

Acton fire fighters had a busier night on Sunday, though. For details see the story on Page 10.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"We'll be able to get more input from *The Tanner* on what's going on in the town."

— Bill Riddle, village constable, on the police move, Page 4

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