

Willow-Church municipal parking lot could expand

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Acton's Business Improvement Association (BIA) is exploring the possibilities of expanding the municipal parking lot on the corner of Willow and Church Streets, says its secretary.

Gerald Rennie says the next step is his meeting with four downtown merchants — whose businesses sit in line with the lot — in the next two weeks to discuss the

advantages of more parking.

"The BIA feels Acton needs more parking downtown," said Rennie, an Acton councillor, last week. "The proposed expansion would allow for tenant parking and access to trucks. We could put in a fair number of spaces to square up that lot.

"As well, there could be access to the businesses from the back and front. Right now, the unoccupied space (between the stores and

existing lot) is just a mud area where rain sits."

Rennie is firm in his stance that Acton needs more downtown parking. "This is a way of getting it without a great degree of difficulty. There's no way it's a loser. But I won't know more until I meet with the four store owners."

When approached on Monday, downtown business owner Sandra Deforest wasn't exactly thrilled with the possibility of a bigger

municipal parking lot.

"I just don't want to have to pay more taxes. I don't care how much lighting they put in the lot, I don't want to walk to that parking lot in the dark," the operator of the Motor Vehicle Licence Office fumed.

In a related story, there's been talk within the BIA about a proposal to eliminate on-the-street parking downtown.

Olev Richling, co-owner of Blooms Away flower shop on Mill

Street, is all for the move.

"We have to show off more of the downtown. And eliminating parking would show the businesses off 10 times more," said a convinced Richling. "If you have open space in front of your business, people have to see what's there. Plus, it would give cars a chance to get through (a congested downtown)."

Countered Deforest: "Getting rid of downtown parking is a big, big blunder. On-the-street parking is a necessity, because we don't have a booming downtown business area. It's nice to have things the way some people would like, but you have to think of the repercussions.

"If I'm driving in a small town and I see a cute shop, I pull over and go in. If I can't, I keep driving and most people are probably the same. There's nothing wrong with Acton."

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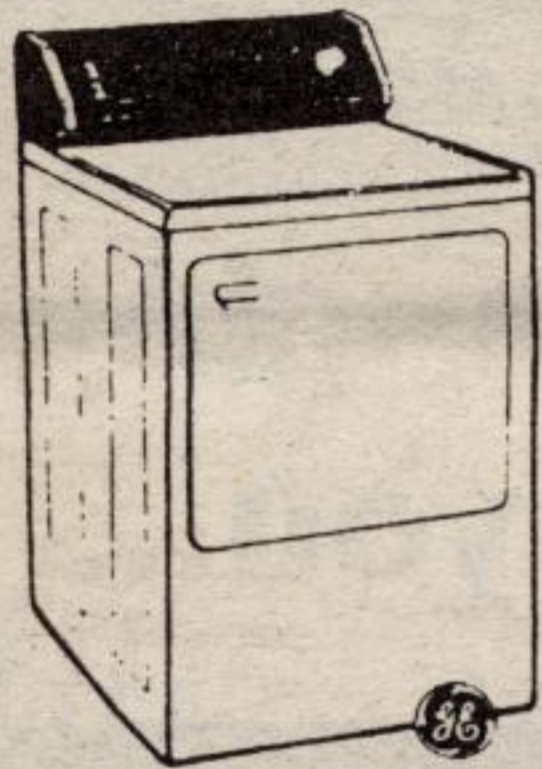
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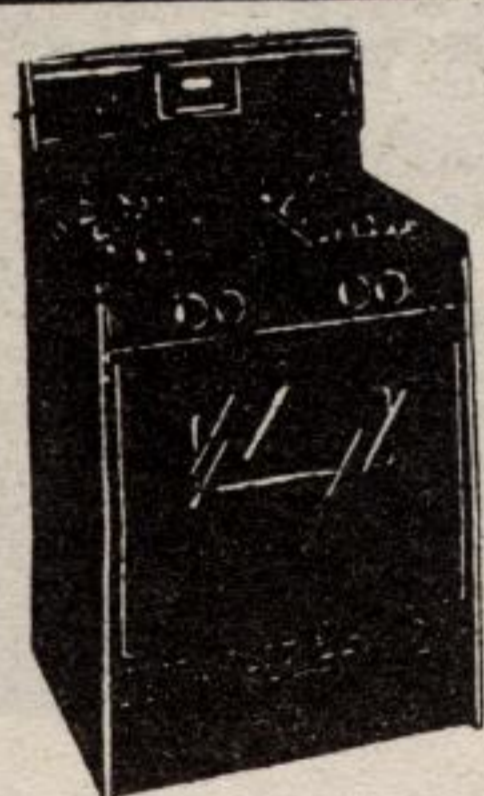
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In Brief...

This Friday and Saturday sees the annual **Spring Rummage Sale** return to St. Joseph's church basement. The Friday sale runs from 9:30 to 4 pm while the doors are open between 9 and 1 on Saturday.

Saturday is also **Trinity United Church's 150th Anniversary** at their Springtime Tea and Bake-Craft Sale, which runs from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm. Call 853-2090 for details or tickets.

A free screening clinic to assess **pre-school children's development** is being offered at the Acton Parent-Child Resource Centre (85 Wallace St.) on Friday, May 5 from 9:30 am to 11:30 am. For more info call 853-2574.

Acton's annual **Rotary Auction and Dinner** is slated for Friday, May 12 at 6 pm. For tickets phone Jake Kuiken, 853-5062, or Robb Charette, 853-4577.

Contaminated lagoons at old tannery site

From Front Page explained.

Elliott noted that are areas on the property that have lagoons full of contaminated materials from the leather-making process.

"We would be loath to see any of that go into the Black Creek and nobody at the Town has a clear understanding of what exactly is at that site, so I think it's time we got together with the owners."

Councillor Rick Bonnette noted that he recently had a complaint from an Agnes Street resident whose property was vandalized by someone who came through the Beardmore property.

Bonnette said the Town should consider making Halton Police their agents so police would be able to enter the property at any time to deal with trespassers or vandals.