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THE ROCKWOOD MILLER

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 1997

Eramosa Township hosts land use meeting Monday

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Rockwood Miller

If you have questions or comments on either the planning boundaries for Rockwood or proposals for adult lifestyle communities in the area, you

are invited to a public meeting to be hosted by the Township next Monday (Jan. 13).

Several land owners and developers have come forward with proposals to build adult lifestyle communities

both within and outside the established planning boundary for the village. Recently Eramosa Council received 33 letters of support from people urging Council to proceed with the concept of re-

tirement village housing and in particular Rockwood developer Ron Oelbaum's proposal for lands on the east side of County Road 44.

In 1992 the Ontario Municipal Board agreed with the Township that it was premature to deal with development plans for Oelbaum's lands on both sides of County Road 44, which are outside of the planning limits for the village. Oelbaum appealed that decision and the section of the Official Plan dealing with his lands was deferred.

Reeve Rick Hughes said Oelbaum agreed to withdraw that appeal if Council would seriously entertain a planning

application or an adult lifestyle community.

In 1995 plans for a comprehensive review of lands outside the Official Plan boundary to determine what lands, if any, would be suitable for development was discussed, but that study stalled when the municipality refused to pay for the study. The land owners involved would pay only if the results of the study could be incorporated into a planning document guaranteeing that if the land was suitable for development, they could build on it.

"The problem is that we can't put any more land into

a planning boundary until we get more sewage capacity for Rockwood," Eramosa Reeve Rick Hughes last Thursday.

Hughes said that the meeting Monday is strictly exploratory and although Oelbaum's request is "perhaps the driver" for the meeting, it will not be a review of Oelbaum's request.

"What we will be asking at the meeting is whether the community is interested in having this kind of possible development around the outskirts of the present planning boundary," Hughes said.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm at Rockmosa Community Centre.



MADE FAMOUS: Eden Mills illustrator Janet Wilson, right, used photos she had taken of Mabel Parker, left, and her granddaughter Rebecca and painted them for the children's book released in the spring *At Grandpa's Sugar Bush*, a story about the making of maple syrup. (Eve Martin photo)

Water needs studying: Reeve

Eramosa Reeve Rick Hughes, an Eden Mills resident, thinks Township Council should put some money aside each year to study possible long-term water and sewer improvements in Eden Mills which is currently serviced by private wells and septic systems.

Hughes made the suggestion as Council asked him to issue a press release indicating that there haven't been any additional water quality problems in Eden Mills, other than those identified in a four-year-old Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Health Unit study.

Following Councillor Mark Thomsen's Notice of Motion in November asking the Health Unit for updated well and septic system tests, several councillors received phone calls complaining that their talk of water problems

had killed the local real estate market in the village.

That Notice of Motion was deferred until the Township asked the Health Department if another well and septic system test program should be done. The Health Unit indicated that it had already done the testing and suggested the Township contact its engineering consultant and ask if there was merit in doing further tests.

Last month Council asked Hughes to draft and send out a press release indicating that there are no new water quality problems.

"The intention now is to indicate to the public and the media that no new information has come to Council to indicate that the water quality in Eden Mills has deteriorated any further since the

study was done," Hughes said last Thursday, adding the release will say there are no immediate plans to put full municipal services for water or sewage in Eden Mills.

Hughes also reminded Council that it would have to act if the water situation in Eden Mills deteriorated like it did in the 1970s in Rockwood, when the municipality was forced to hook up with the Guelph water system and sewage treatment plant because the village wells were polluted.

Hughes suggested if the Township set aside money each year it would be able to look at the Health Department findings to determine if a communal water or sewers or septic system was possible — Hughes estimated that study could cost \$120,000.

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