

The gloves come off at Conservative nomination meeting

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Turner has become a household name across Canada as a best-selling author of financial books, a broadcaster, newspaper columnist, speaker and successful entrepreneur. Turner owns and operates a television production company in Toronto and a Caledon-based hospitality company.

"If I were Gary Carr, I'd be re-assessing my career options," said Garth Turner, Conservative candidate. "He is about to have the fight of his life."

A few days later, Turner had harsh words as well for former colleague Belinda Stronach as she crossed over to the Liberal party. "Today's opportunistic and egocentric actions by Belinda Stronach in no way change anything about our national political situation," reads a statement on Mr. Turner's website, www.garth.ca. "Like our local MP, Belinda has sold out for reasons of power and convenience, not conviction."



PHOTO BY DONNA DANIELLI
Conservative candidate Garth Turner and wife Dorothy share a moment after his victory at a recent nomination meeting which saw more than 300 Conservative party members turn out to cast their vote.

Greens opposed to greens

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located at Britannia and Trafalgar on a 300-acre parcel of land and the other, an 18-hole course situated on 100-acres of land at Guelph Line and Nassagawaya.

Beyette's concerns were echoed by other speakers, and in fact, are supported inadvertently by the Region of Halton whose report Environmental Gain via Golf Course Development in Halton (2001) points out that the region had at the time of the report, 30 golf courses or double the number needed to serve it's own population.

Glen Wellings, a planning consultant for the Nassagawaya course, pointed out that his client intends to create an environmentally friendly golf course and has in fact already planted 900 trees.

Furthermore, Wellings implied that the community needs more public golf courses and that this property is suitable as it is not prime agricultural land.

"There has not been significant agricultural investment in the property for many years," said Wellings.

Perhaps unaware of the rather activist nature of the farmers in Halton, Wellings found himself on the receiving end of rebuttal from local resident and Director of the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture, Lieven Gevaert.

"The greenbelt was to ensure that farm land would not be taken away," said Gevaert. "Approximately 39 percent of this land is class 2 and approximately 37 percent class 3. This is considered prime land by any definition," he said.

Other concerns involved water and how the golf courses would keep those greens green without affecting the watershed negatively, increased traffic and pesticides and their possible transfer to active agricultural lands.

Few of the concerns aired by residents impressed Councillor Jan Mowbray, Ward 3, who in fact came out and said point blank that many residents in her ward are in favour of the course.

According to Mowbray, concerns about increases in traffic and garbage are unwarranted.

She has, she said, checked with police who advised her that traffic should not be a concern.

Mowbray also rather bitingly pointed out that in terms of pesticides, the agriculture industry uses more per unit than do golf courses and she rounded out her rebuke with an assertion that golf courses are actually stewards of biodiversity.

Not one to take such a claim sitting down, Gevaert disputed her statement on pesticides and farming, claiming that in fact, the opposite is true and that farmers use the least.

Sharon Anderson, a local farmer since the 1960's, raised concerns about trespassing, stray golf balls, water, wildlife and also concerns that the activities of daily farm life - such as the spreading of manure, will cause complaints from those who use the course.

Elizabeth Simpson also spoke about liability, water and pesticide issues and in fact submitted a report to council outlining the findings of a consultant she hired.

"Will we be forced out of business?" she asked.

In the end, George Marshall best summed up the feelings of residents.

"It seems like a bad trade off. We get the problems...somebody else gets the profit," he said.

THE GREENBELT WAS TO ENSURE THAT FARMLAND WOULD NOT BE TAKEN AWAY

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