

# Highway 25 now Region road, loses its highway status

By MAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY  
The New Tanner

January first was moving day for a number of Halton Hills residents but it's unlikely any of them have or will notice the change.

Residents along Highway 25 moved from living on a provincial highway to residing on a regionally-owned road because the province kicked off the new year by handing the highway over to Halton Region.

"It was part of the provincial downloading," said Ward 1 councillor Rick Bonnette, "but people shouldn't see any difference. In fact, repair work on the road - if any gets done - may be a little faster since the ministry had to get any work approved by the province before they could start it."

Halton Region transportation co-ordinator Nick Zervos said the Region will be officially responsible for the road but any actual work will be done by public works staff for the Town of Halton Hills.

Right now Ontario Ministry of Transportation crews are continuing to handle the winter maintenance on the road because of a contract with Halton Hills, Zervos says. But that will end and the Town will assume its new responsibilities in the spring.

"People shouldn't notice any change in the standard

of maintenance on the road," he said. "There are minimum public standards for roads depending on which classification they fall under and (Halton Region) must meet those."

The Region already has responsibility for major regional corridors such as Trafalgar Road and the Guelph Line, Zervos points out. Highway 25 will fall into the same category.

There are no plans for future changes or improvements to the road, Bonnette warns.

"They did some patching on the curve at the brow of the escarpment below Speyside just before it was handed over," he says, "but there isn't any widening or anything planned for the near future."

The province gave the Region just over \$10 million in block funding as part of the transition package, but Bonnette warns that won't allow for much.

"At something like \$1 million a mile to do any construction that wouldn't go far," he explains.

The only change under consideration is renaming the road, he said. Instead of Highway 25 it has been suggested the road be called Regional Road 25. Since that could be confusing to tourists and travellers relying on old provincial maps, Bonnette wants to see some sort of signage indicating the

road's former designation.

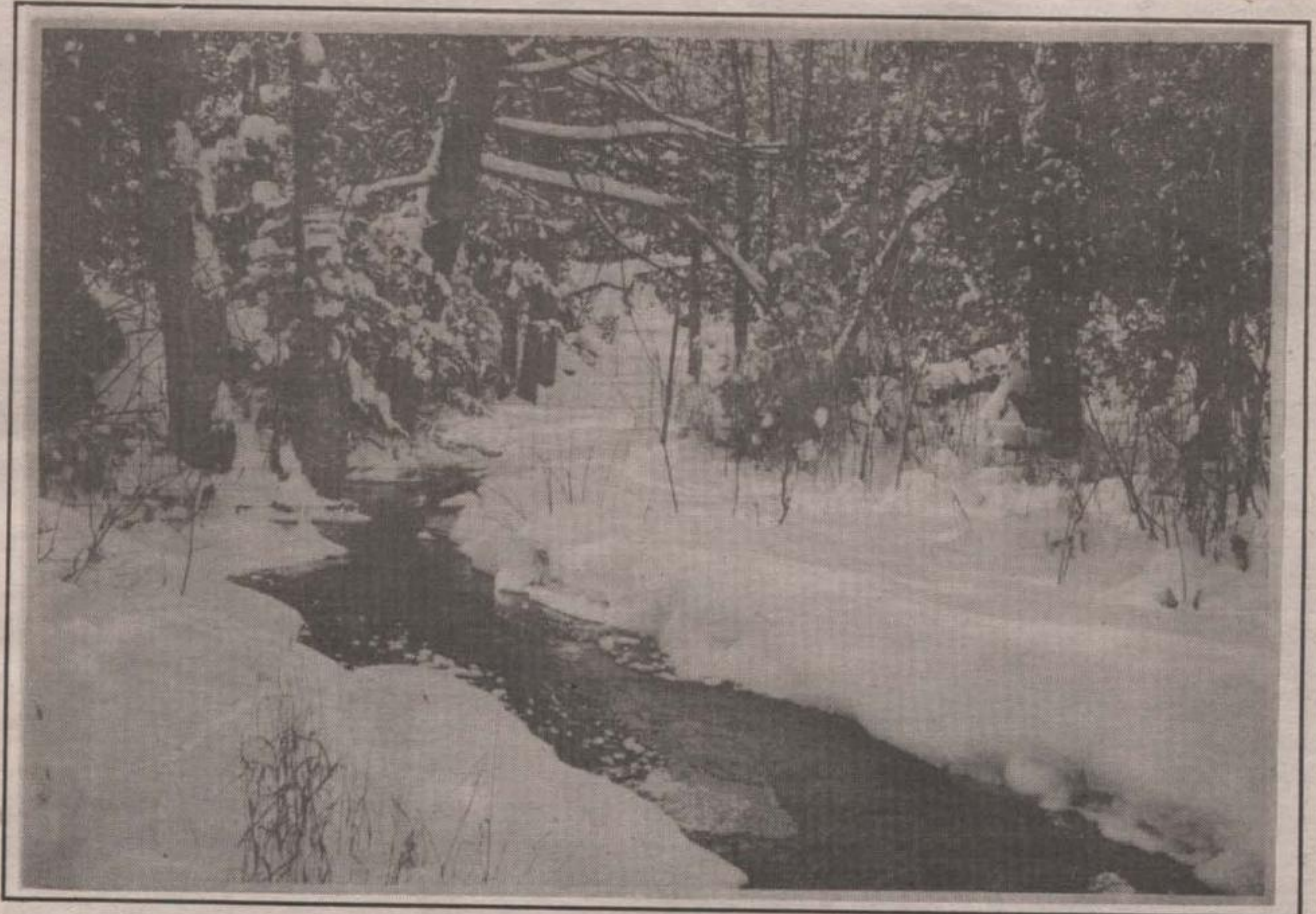
"A change like that could be very bad for places like the Olde Hide House and Chudleigh's," he said, "so I'll be suggesting some sort of wording on the new signs indicating this is formerly Highway 25."

Halton Hills public works manager Ted Drewlo said the town has no idea yet what the financial impact of the additional road will be on its budgets. That will be figured out before staff takes over their new maintenance duties in April or May.

The town has had a contract with the ministry for winter maintenance of the "connecting link" portion of Highway 7 and 25 in Acton for some years and that remains in effect, he says. The ministry does the work and Halton Hills gets the bill.

Maintenance of Highway 25 will be split, Zervos says. Oakville will handle the lower section. Milton takes over from Highway 5 to its northern border. Exactly where that boundary will be is still to be determined, Drewlo says. If the old boundary is retained the switch point is at 5 Sideroad.

Public Works Committee members will discuss the proposed name change in February. Anyone wanting to comment on the proposal is invited to contact committee secretary Sue Lathan at 878-8113, ext. 7254, Bonnette says.



COOL: Wintry weather which has been accompanied by lots of snow presents an enjoyable scene along a rural Acton road. - Hartley Coles photo

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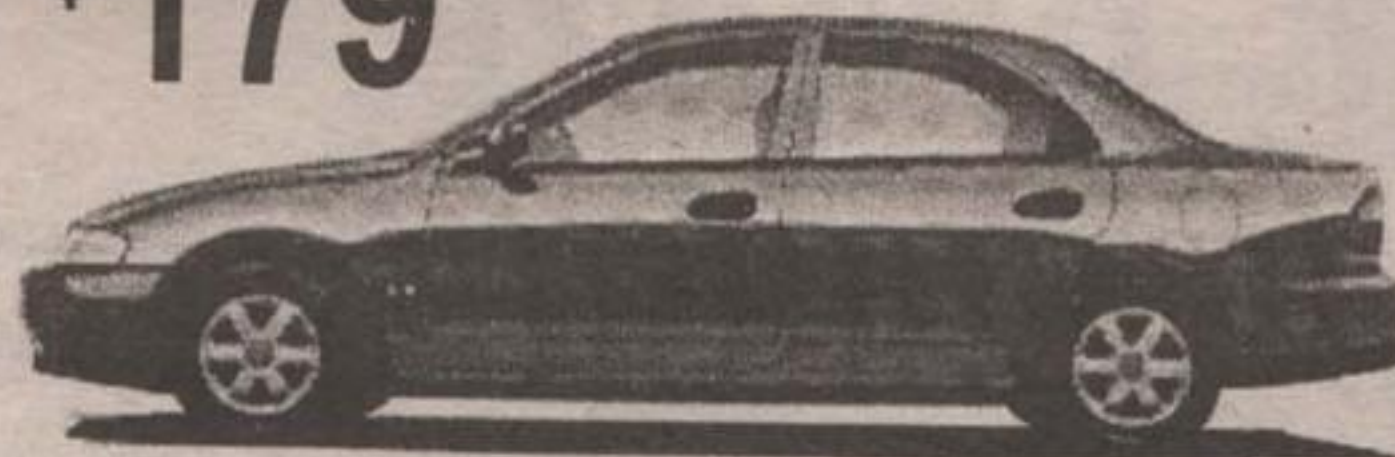
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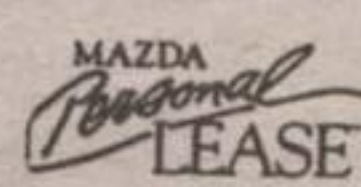
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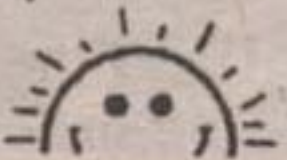
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