

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

## 'Use it or lose it'

We're certainly 100 per cent behind those councillors who suggest Halton Hills should take a "use it or lose it" approach to planning approvals, and water and sewer capacity.

We agree with Councillor Elliott that developers can't sit on their approvals forever without putting a shovel in the ground, while others are ready to build.

The subject was broached because local politicians have been frustrated by the lack of both residential and commercial development in Acton. Developers have tied up sewage and water capacity for years while others, eager to build, have had to sit back and fume at the Town for lack of foresight.

Criticism directed at the developers for their action is answered by reasons such as waiting for market conditions to improve. Well, they won't bet much better market conditions than they have had in the last couple of years. Interest rates are about as low as they can go and that works for both the buyer and seller. What more do they want?

We don't like this dog-in-the-manger attitude of tying up land so no one else can develop it. In fact, Ho Wong, the Region's manager of planning services, said staff at the Region would like to develop a "use it or lose it" policy so developers could not get development approval and then sit on it. One way might well be by putting a codicil in an agreement with a limit on the time it takes for development to start.

The fly in the ointment, of course, are the legal implications which has made town staff cautious. The last time a developer lost sewage capacity because of lack of development, the developer appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and won the decision.

Glenn Wellings, manager of development review in Halton Hills, said staff wouldn't recommend stripping a developer's planning approvals because the development has sat idle. But if it isn't happening immediately, does that mean we abandon our planning? he asked, noting we can't make development happen.

Of course, he's right, they can't make development happen. However, when a developer signs up for sewage capacity he also indicates a desire to develop, not a licence to tie up development. Somewhere between the two extremes of fast and no development, there has to be middle ground which would penalize if there's no action on the proposal. Otherwise they should be stripped of their allotment.

There's just no excuse under the present market conditions to plead for better interest and loan rates. It's a phoney excuse and needs a "use it or lose it" approach immediately in Acton's case.

## Society's hard stance

An agreement with the Town of Halton Hills signed 23 years ago permitting Acton Agricultural Society unrestricted use of Prospect Park and the building there during the annual fall fair for as long as the Society exists, may be the ammunition needed to spur the Town to find a better solution to the dilemma than tearing the old arena down.

The Town now wants to demolish the arena claiming inability to get insurance for the building, which it is also claimed, is "structurally unsound." Council has asked Town staff to prepare demolition tenders but has declared it is willing to work with the Agricultural Society and a sub committee of Heritage Acton, which wants to save the building.

The Society is taking its hard stance to ensure they are not left without a building in the park once this year's fair is over. And they have a right, in perpetuity it seems, for the park and arena.

Heritage Acton, meanwhile, is juggling several strategies for saving the building, which is not 70 years old as some press reports claim. A small part of it is but the arena, which has been refurbished ever since 1961, is really only 37 years young. Hardly broken in, you might say. Some parts are even more youthful.

The trick is to turn it back into a usable facility able to support itself without being a taxing burden.



**HALTON HILLS SAILING CAMP:** This camp caters to kids aged seven to 13 years. The participants are: Chloe Salt, Mitchell Peragine, Laurie Klarner, Katie Frost, Rachael Murden, Cassandra LeClair, Janine Klarner, Nicholas LeClair, Eric Brading, Cam Noble, Brent Emigh, Keith Grant, Cameron Gee, Jazmin Salt, Justin Lim, Brian Albers, Kalya Murray, Devon Murray, Karen Klarner, Cheri Anne Paisley (staffer), Chris Poirier (staffer), Jasmine Stofast (volunteer), and Laura Anne Sheehan (volunteer). - Ellen Piehl photo.

## Acton, land of a thousand names

By ANGELA TYLER  
The New Tanner

The voice on the other end of the phone was asking to confirm the company's mailing address. They asked, "So, that's in Halton Hills, Ontario, correct?" I could feel my toes curl and my stomach muscles tighten. "No, that is Acton, Ontario", I replied firmly. "Oh, what's the difference?" the unknown person wanted to know. Long time Acton residents know that this answer had the potential of being lengthy, as many Actonites don't like being clumped in with Georgetown. I later started thinking about all the communities, intown and rural that make up Acton.

There are many rural communities and individual villages that, although may not be in the boundaries of Acton, many residents consider themselves part of Acton. As well as distinctive country areas, intown Acton has sections, unique individually, as a whole they help make up the town. Some of the names may not be familiar to some. Some areas are new, estate-like subdivisions.

Intown Acton, in my opinion is a combination of at least 11 distinct areas. They are Glenlea, Bovis, Warren Grove (the wartime), the Crescent, the new West Meadows, Danville, Lakeview, Birchway, Cobblehill, Kingham, cemetery hill, The Bower and the downtown core. Although there are two other new developments, the houses beside the high school and behind the curling club, I see them as part of Bovis. Glenlea is the area south of Highway 7, behind Tim Hortons. Bovis is the area around McKenzie-Smith Bennett School. The wartime is the houses on McDonald between Wallace and Division and on McDonald Blvd. The crescent is southwest of the olde Hide House

country. The ones I can think of are: Bannockburn, Churchill, Coles Court, Wordenview, Silvercreek, Wildwood, Shorthill, Southwinds, Kiltie Springs, Blue Springs, Ennisclaire, Darbyville, Scotch Block, Sayer's Mills, Haltonville, Moffat, Pineridge, and Crewson's Corners. It seems with many families migrating westward and the need for more rural subdivisions, these areas are increasing each year.

There are also larger rural communities individual in their own sense, yet some consider part of Acton. These include Limehouse, Ballinacree, Speyside and Brookville.

Some developments are named for the developer or have historical significance. Once again, Acton logic can be applied to some names of areas. Let's use Churchill as an example. Churchill is at the north end of Churchill Road. At Churchill Road and the Townline is a church, Churchill Church, hence the name Churchill. There's a church on the top of the hill.

Warren Grove or the wartime is named after the Warren family who owned the land. They had a grove of trees.

Looking where Crewson's Corners is now you have to think back to the logic of naming this area. The area was named after Morgan Crewson, Esqueasing's first pioneer settler. However, if you take a drive out Highway 7 towards Rockwood, you may notice there is a lack of a corner on along the highway. Think back to the time before highways. North of the highway, above the railway line there is a two-way stop where Townline and Townline meet. Here you would find Crewson's Corners.

The local area is rich with interesting names, some as interesting as their residents are. These areas are linked together not to create a town, but a community... Acton.

If 11 areas sound like a lot for intown, there are still more in the



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