

# Bonnette asks for meeting to speed up development

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

Frustrated by the lack of residential and commercial development in Acton, Councillor Rick Bonnette has asked Town staff to set up another meeting with Acton East developers to see if the impasse can be broken. A similar meeting over a year ago produced no results, but Bonnette wants to try again.

In the four years since the Ontario Municipal Board

approved plans for Acton's population to increase to 10,000 there's been only one major development built - West Meadows Village - and Bonnette wants to know why the developers aren't even marketing the area.

"It's prudent to find out why they aren't moving," Bonnette said, adding that local councillors are being asked to support commercial development - Home Hardware's proposed new store at Queen Street and Churchill Road and the proposed

Leathertown Junction - which were not approved in the OMB decision.

Following the last meeting the developers were to try to find ways to reduce the \$1 million price tag for a storm water management pond that must be built before development can occur in Acton east, but the Town has heard nothing.

Glenn Wellings, the Town manager of development review, said "it's really difficult to tell a developer when to go forward," but he felt that the

suggested meeting is a good idea.

"We're getting people like (Acton developer) Doug Fread filing applications on the old Ajax property which files in the face of what we want to do on the Coscan property in Acton east, but Coscan is no where to be seen," Wellings said in an interview on Thursday. Coscan has draft approval to build subdivision and a major plaza on the south side of Highway 7, east of Churchill Road.

"The Acton councillors and staff are wondering why more developers aren't going forward and maybe another meeting would help."

One developer, Jerry Montemarano, whose Bayfield Homes is proceeding with plans for another 60 houses with an extension of Lasby Lane, said he knows why there's no major development happening.

"Unfortunately Halton Hills hasn't got enough man-

power to service builders and developers," Montemarano said in an interview on Friday.

"Apparently there's just one engineer to look after everybody out there and it's taking forever and a day to get any paper work through. If they had enough work force, we'd have probably been in the ground this fall and now I'll be lucky to get there in the spring."

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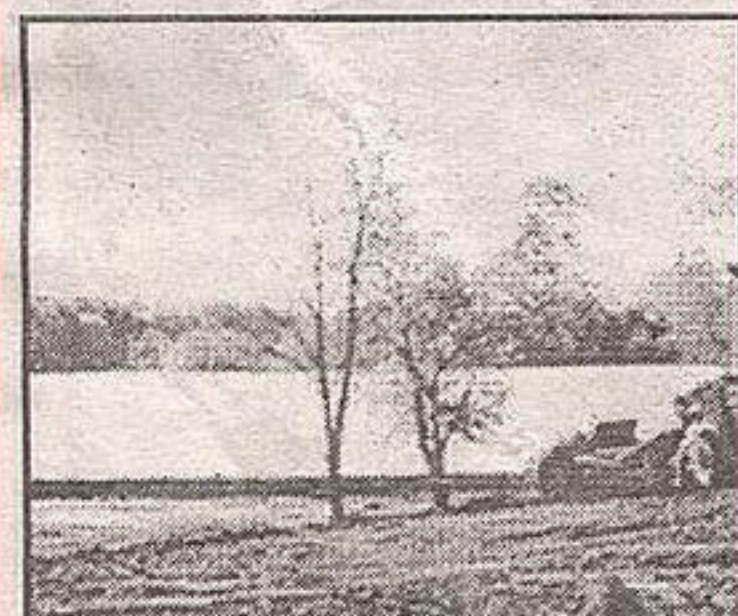
## What's Inside



Two Acton fire fighters were among those honoured last week with 65 years of volunteer fire fighting between them. See Page 7



Willow Lane is celebrating 20 years in Acton servicing health-conscious customers. See Page 16



As the buildings come down and the land is reclaimed the old Beardmore tannery grounds create a new, pleasant vista. See photos on Page 4

# Schools here off hit list



**CLEANUP CONCERNS:** Acton Boulevard homeowner Henry de Vries is concerned about the fire and safety hazard posed by this pile of debris behind his home. - Frances Niblock photo

## Vacant land subject of concern

The owner of the vacant land, soon to be a housing subdivision on an extension of Lasby Lane, promised to cleanup up the site after being told that it was a hazardous and dangerous mess.

Several residents, whose backyards are adjacent to the property north of McDonald Boulevard between Churchill Road and Division Street, called the Town and The New Tanner to complain about the site.

A house and barn on the

property had been demolished and the callers were worried about a rumour that a large pile of wooden from the house would be burned to dispose of it. Homeowners in the area report seeing youths among the piles of rubble with flashlights and firecrackers and are worried about somebody being injured or a fire being set by accident.

When contacted, Jerry Montemarano, president of Bayfield Homes, which

hopes to begin construction of 60 homes in the area, was surprised that the site had not been cleaned up.

Initially, Bayfield allowed local fire fighters to use the vacant farmhouse for training in search and rescue and ventilation exercises, which Montemarano said, may have led neighbours to believe that the remains, which have been pushed into a great tall pile, were going to be burned. Montemarano said

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By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
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It looks like Acton's two public elementary schools are safe from possible closure or consolidation.

At a meeting tonight (Wednesday) Halton trustees are expected to ratify a decision made last night by the accommodation management committee to delete both Robert Little and McKenzie-Smith Bennett schools from the list of Halton schools to be considered for closure or consolidation.

Prior to the accommodation meeting Halton District School Board chair Ethel Gardiner, who taught at Robert Little for 19 years, said she was "fairly confident" that the cluster of elementary schools would be off the list for review.

"The Acton review area clearly has excess capacity - but less excess than any school in the review area and I'm sure the Board is interested in consistent application of the closure and con-

solidation criteria across the entire region," Gardiner said.

Because the Halton board has approximately 6,773 more student spaces than students, trustees must get rid of that excess before being eligible for funding for new schools and also to be able to charge developers lot levies to help pay for new school sites in growing areas.

Robert Little school has capacity for 484 students but is operating under capacity with 350. MBS's capacity is 709 and the projected enrolment 625, leaving the school with unused space for 84 students.

Although it is operating under capacity, Acton District High School has already been removed from the list for possible review - mainly because it is a community school and there is no other facility available for the students to attend.

There are approximately 50 Halton schools - mostly in south Burlington and Oakville - which remain on the review list for possible closure or consolidation.

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See pages 8 and 9



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