

# Good news for Acton development scene

Finally, there's some good news about the dormant development situation in Acton. Spring construction is planned for one 60-unit development and there's progress in renewed talks with the Acton east landowners that have not built one house since their subdivisions were approved approximately five years ago.

At Monday's council meeting Acto-2 Investment Ltd. was given a one-year extension on its draft plan approval for a 60-single-family home development at the end of Lasby Lane, north of McDonald Boulevard between Division street and Acton Boulevard. That approval would have lapsed February 1.

Acton Councillor Norm Elliott said the news from Acto-2 is encouraging. "This is good news and it's the sort of thing we want to get out to the public - that it's not just an extension without any understanding of where they plan to go," Elliott said.

In a recent interview Acto-2, Bayfield Homes,

president Jerry Montemarano said the final engineering designs for the subdivision are with the Town and they will build this spring.

The other bright spot on the development scene comes after a meeting last week between Town staff and councillors and the Acton east developers - Rinarin, Coscan

(now Brookfield Homes) and Bond Arch (now Tribute Homes).

The developers blame the long delay in building on a soft market and the high cost of necessary upgrades to the storm water management facility, but in an interview on Monday the Town's manager of development review, Glenn Wellings, said they've

come up with an action plan. "On the Brookfield site (south of Queen Street and east of Churchill Road) there are two elementary school sites proposed and I've written to the public board asking what its position is on the school site," Wellings explained.

Another meeting will be held in two months.

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**What's Inside**

The ladies' Auxiliary of the Royal Canadian Legion were treated to dinner prepared by the men of the Legion last week. See page 9.

The Way I See It with Mike O'Leary

Mike's back with his column on snow and a snow job. See page 5.

The Juvenile Tanners are looking for a win over Elora this week to clinch hard fought play off series. See page 11.

Acton's old arena was more than blocks and mortar. See a paean on its demise on page 4.

## Snowmobiles- nuisance or fun?



**COSTLY RIDE:** This Acton snowmobile enthusiast, who didn't want to be identified, didn't know if it was legal to ride on the playground at Robert Little school (it's not), but said it was a safe place in town to take his daughter for a ride. The Town voted to quadruple the fine - the \$120 - for driving snowmobiles illegally on Town streets and boulevards. - Frances Niblock photo

## Town hikes fines for snow machines using town streets

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

Pending approval from the Attorney General the town will quadruple the fine for anyone caught and convicted of driving a snowmobile on Town sidewalks or streets. The Town's 1975 bylaw includes a \$30 fine and on Monday night Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson suggested a \$130 fine, which would total \$150 with court costs, would be more of a deterrent.

The recent snowfalls have brought snowmobiles out in full force in Acton and sparked complaints from several people who claim the powerful machines are noisy, dangerous nuisances, including one Acton resident who complained about speeding snowmobiles riding past his house on the sidewalk where his children were playing.

### Private property

The Town's motorized snow vehicle bylaw and the Provincial Snow Vehicle Act allows the use of snowmobiles on private property. In Halton Hills snow mobile use is banned from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. and the bylaw requires all snowmobiles have a five-foot high safety antenna.

They can't be driven on sidewalks, boulevards, parks

or median strips except to get to and from a private site.

Provincial legislation requires a \$30 licence plate, which must be displayed on the machine's cowling, and the operator must be licenced if they don't have a valid driver's licence. You must be 16 or older to drive a snowmobile on the road and over 12 to drive on private property. All users must also have insurance.

### Legality questioned

One snowmobile driver, riding on the playground at Robert Little school when it was closed on Friday because of the weather, was unsure where he could ride legally.

"I don't know if it's against the law to use this property but it's a safe place for me to take my young daughter for a ride in Town," the man, who didn't want to be identified, said, asking, "How do you know where you can ride and where you can't?"

The same man continued to use the school property for his evening rides all this week.

The Town gets five or six complaints about noisy snowmobiles each winter and Halton police report roughly the same number. In Acton, police can't remember laying a snowmobile-related charge in the past five or six years.

## Tax increase, leisure centre on Town's budget agenda

While some politicians want a zero property tax increase for Town purposes this year, the majority of councillors on the Halton Hills budget committee are willing to consider a small tax increase. The committee instructed staff to bring back an operating budget with an increase of no more than 1.5 per cent or \$9.67 more for the average Acton homeowner.

For this year's budget

process the Town lured former treasurer and CEO Ray King out of retirement to help fill the void left by the recent resignations of treasurer Andy Koopmans and the Town's financial analyst.

At the first budget meeting last Wednesday staff suggested an operating budget with no more than a 1.5 per cent maximum tax increase and laid out a proposed \$6.6 million capital spending plan

with 54 projects and approximately \$700,000 worth of projects bumped from last year's budget.

Several councillors balked making a leisure centre - which is not in the proposed capital budget - a spending priority and to a recommendation, which ultimately passed, from Councillor Jane Fogal to add \$200,000 to the capital budget to begin design work on a centre.

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