

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Big Daddy is here

The Ontario Municipal Board's (OMB) decision to allow Halton Hills Village Homes Inc. to use lands in Georgetown south for housing, instead of industrial as the Town had planned, will affect the entire Town.

In effect the OMB is declaring Georgetown is an extension of Brampton because few empty fields now exist between Brampton's borders at Norval and Halton Hills. And the fact Halton Hills is part of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) is becoming more apparent as over 3,000 new homes are being erected in Georgetown's urban boundaries which have an elasticity few would have believed a few years ago.

Former mayor and Halton Region chairman Rick Morrow said the aim of council in the past was to keep urban Georgetown within its natural boundaries, which would include the Credit River, Silver Creek and the ravine lands that run through Hungry Hollow. The ravine lands were sacrosanct, devoted to conservation of the natural environment.

Despite the advance planning and the thought that went into planning a viable community with a "heart," developers took their case to the OMB and opened up the land south of Georgetown for housing development. Working on the theory that if people move into hundreds of new homes they will also need a place to work, council reserved approximately 365 acres for industrial land.

It made sense for a lot of reasons. The closer residents are to their places of employment the fewer cars on the roads and the less pollution, keeping air quality high in a town that has clean air. Most industry attracted to the area would add little or no pollution and would ease the lack of industrial land in the Georgetown area. Not to mention the taxes new industry would bring to the whole Town of Halton Hills.

However, the OMB decision to release the industrial lands as "the best and appropriate use for Halton Hills Village Homes Inc. land is not industrial, but to complete the residential community of Georgetown South," is a smack in the face of local elected officials, business people and citizens who see the future of Georgetown as another in the string of faceless communities that extend from Brampton west.

It certainly destroys any balance that exists in the Town between Acton with its 7,500 people and the 40,000 people, or more, who will eventually make up Georgetown. It suggests that unless the wishes of Acton and area are given more clout, we'll be submerged in the overabundance of population in Georgetown. That will certainly reflect in the numbers of representatives on council where at least some decisions are made.

Recently The Hamilton Spectator ran a full page article noting that Acton is fighting to retain its identity in an increasingly lopsided population balance within Halton Hills. It's obvious now unless the OMB decision is fought in the courts and defeated, the loss of any local autonomy here is certain. The only way to escape would be to petition Queen's Park to once again give us back our Town and let Halton Hills' boundaries extend only as far as the Niagara Escarpment.

Those who maintain it can't be done only have to look at towns of similar size and population in Ontario which run their own affairs well, and don't want to be part of larger municipalities. If they can operate successfully there's no reason why it can't happen here.

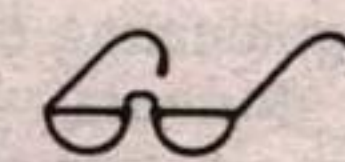
It's obvious from events over the past 25 years of Halton Hills that the brakes were put on Acton's development with new fish laws and other "fishy" water moves. It takes years for a local developer to get approvals for housing projects while Georgetown and area gets approvals to build thousands of home in one fell swoop, water, fish and pollution be dammed.



HAYING WEATHER: All that rain and warm weather was perfect for hay crops. Area farmers were hard at it over the past week finishing off their baling at farms near Rockwood. - Angela Tyler photo



Editor's Notebook



Ed Jennings started bowling alleys

Blame it on the short week or the heat, whatever, as Edith Jennings pointed out, our story about the awards to Acton bowling Lanes proprietors Gord and Darlene Labombard last week contained an error. It was Ed and Edith Jennings who started the bowling lanes over their garage on Main St. N., not Ken Hulford as our story said.

When the Jennings started the bowling alleys after W.W.II it was a big thing for Acton

which had always appreciated recreation facilities. The only bowling in Acton prior to that was on the bowling greens situated on the block bordered by Church, Mill and Willow Streets.

If you're a bit long in the tooth and have a good memory you'll remember the pleasant summer nights may residents spent on those greens, garbed in whites on grass that looked like the top of a billiard table. Overhead incandescent lights that attracted bugs of every description hung over the greens meticulously maintained by Bruce Pargeter, the Beardmore gardener.

Both the town's tennis courts and the bowling greens were situated there, the tennis courts occupying that part of the block closest to Mill St. with the club house situated where the former Price Check store is now located. There was a garage on the west corner, a Ford agency at one time, operated by Harry Norton's father, Bill, and later by the Thompson brothers, Ray and Bill.

It was a valuable piece of real estate and as the Beardmore family sold their interests in the Beardmore tannery the interest in community activities declined. The result was commercial interests bought the property and built what became the

Canadian Tire store and the Foodland store.

So when Ed Jennings started the inside bowling alleys in 1947 it fulfilled a need in this community of about 2,500 people then. Five and 10 pin bowlers then travelled to Guelph or other places to participate in the sport. Publisher Ted Tyler remembers working as a pinsetter then before the days of the automatic pin setters. Pay was so much a line.

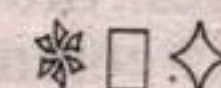
The Jennings sold the six lanes to Ken Hulford who moved here from Hamilton and he operated it until his death. I have some fond memories of Ken Hulford. He smoked cigarettes and could keep the ash almost the entire length of it before hitting the ash tray. He would lean over the counter at the bowling alleys, the ever present cigarette sending wreaths of smoke over his glasses, pecking away at a portable typewriter on which he ground out the bowling news weekly for The

Acton Free Press.

Later owners include Bob Heatley before the Labombards husband and wife team took over. They've certainly brought the six lane alleys to new heights which the Ontario Five-Pin Bowling Association recognized with their award as Proprietors of the Year, which incidentally dovetailed with the Business of the Month award from Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Many of us have spent some happy hours at the Acton Bowling Lanes over the years trying to reach that elusive perfect game of 450. Best I could ever do was a 395 in a run of good luck, for which I still have a trophy for high single. Best most of the fun was in the socializing with the other member of the leagues.

It's a good sport which just about everyone can play, either good or not so good bowlers. Congratulations to the Labombards who succeeded in keeping it a high profile and interesting at a time when there are so many couch potatoes who'd rather watch Bowling for Dollars on the idiot box than getting some exercise.



Acton students who attend Bishop Reding high school in Milton certainly don't take a back seat in the recognition department. Last year the valedictorian at graduation exercises was Steve Orticello who was also the students council president. This year Kevin Dick has been chosen as the valedictorian for the graduation exercises in the fall. Kevin also was chosen to give the homily at a graduation mass last week and Acton parents who attended said it was very well done, interspersing serious thoughts with some humour.



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