

Council decision on YMCA blow to affordable housing

Editor's Note - This letter, which was written in November of last year and sent to The New Tanner, was misplaced and not found until this week. It still has a relevance. We apologize for the delay.

To the editor,
Re: "No Town Money for Acton's YMCA building"

I was disheartened to read about Halton Hills Council's decision not to provide the needed funds or offer creative solutions to find funding for seven affordable housing units in the former YMCA building on Mill Street in Acton. I feel the issue needs a citizen's perspective, with the hope that Council will sincerely reflect on the impact of their negative decision.

For a number of years now, communities across Canada have undergone struggles to meet the very minimum requirements for permanent, affordable housing. The issue is particularly challenging in Ontario's smaller, rural communities where there are limited municipal resources and scarce local employment opportunities. This has created a situation where some individuals

and families, unable to secure economic mobility, find the choices of affordable housing limited and impermanent. The issue is compounded by a history of unstable funding and accountability by governments.

Since the Second World War, affordable housing has been the domain of the federal, provincial, and local governments, or a complex combination of all levels of government. In many instances, not-for-profit agencies, developers, religious groups, and hard-working volunteers have "filled the gaps" which various governments were unable to fill.

Affordable housing is clouded in the same stereotypes associated with social assistance recipients. Those that live in subsidized housing are seen as undeserving, or are assumed to be exploiting government resources in some way. The irony is that most families, including middle-income families, struggle for permanent, affordable housing at some point (think about young couples starting a family, adult children entering college or university, or the needs of dependent elderly parents).

The difference is that the residents of the kind of development proposed by Ms. Biggs often have chronic difficulty securing permanent, affordable and appropriate housing. By appropriate, I include housing that is located near transportation, health, education and other support services needed for daily life - exactly what Ms. Biggs is proposing.

My family and I have lived most of our lives in and around Acton. I don't remember a time when there wasn't discussion or debate surrounding the stability of Acton's downtown core. I find it ludicrous that Council wouldn't take every advantage of securing a relatively small amount of funds (through the Town budget, or through fund development or partnership with the private and voluntary sectors) to support development within the downtown core, especially a creative and socially responsive re-use of a historically significant building.

Council has dismissed any accountability by arguing that the proposal had already received sufficient funding or fee waivers from the federal and regional governments. This argument and inaction is not unlike other local municipalities throughout Ontario, and reinforces the artificial lines of responsibility that inhibit affordable housing from being built. While I sympathize with the constraints of the Town's budget, Council should not ignore creative alternatives, facilitating and advocating for funds elsewhere if necessary.

No one can argue that subsidized housing projects are costly, challenging and sometimes controversial. They are also unavoidable and much needed, especially in Acton. I challenge Council to reconsider their motion - think seriously about the impact of their inaction, and more creatively about how and where they can assist.

Sincerely, Andy Brouwer, Rockwood.

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Major PeeWees oust Fergus, lose to Shores

Acton Major PeeWees eliminated Fergus from the OMHA playoffs winning three games in the best of five series.

Fergus took the first game of the series 2-1, Shaun Harkley scoring the lone Acton goal assisted by Braden Artem and Kevin Deforest.

Acton bounced back to blank Fergus 2-0 on goals by William Stull and Kyle Fellows, assisted by Michael Bentley and Greg Henry respectively. James Burgie registered the shut-out.

Fergus shut-out Acton in game three with a 1-0 decision but the Tanners edged the Fergus club 3-2 in the

fourth game of the series tying it a 2-2. Braden Artem scored two of the Acton goals, Shaun Harkley bagging the other. Sean Nellis, Stull, and Deforest supplied the assists. Burgie was the winning netminder.

In the fifth and final game of the series Acton took a 3-1 decision to reap the awards. Kevin Deforest, Kyle Fellows and Braden Artem each scored a goal to lead the Tanners with Artem also assisting on one, Greg Henry the other. Nick Kosakowski allowed only one goal to the Acton net.

The Tanners met Saugeen Shores in the next round but lost three straight games and were eliminated.

Arrested for assault

Halton Regional Police arrested a Georgetown man following a sexual assault on a woman picked up in Toronto.


Last Sunday, February 10, in the early morning hours, a 25-year-old woman was walking in the area of Lakeshore Road and Islington Avenue in the Etobicoke area of Toronto when a man approached her, police reported. After some discussion, the two spent a number

of hours driving around the Toronto area in his car, eventually ending up south of Georgetown in an isolated area around 7am that morning.

The woman was physically and sexually assaulted by the man at this location, police said.

Investigation by police identified the suspect, who turned himself into police on Tuesday, February 12, in Georgetown.

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Garry George

Shop Talk

Some recent questions and comments prompt me to write about the following items:

Counterfeit Money:
Question: "I think I was given a counterfeit \$100 bill, how can I tell a fake bill from a real one?"
Answer: Counterfeiting is at low levels, and with your cooperation we can help keep it that way. Stop by the Village Constables office and ask for the latest Bank of Canada brochure. The brochure lists key security features found on genuine bank notes and what to do if you suspect you have a counterfeit bill.

A Thorough Snow Job
Question: My neighbour just pushes all the snow from his driveway out onto the road. Is that allowed?
Answer: No. The placing or pushing of snow or ice onto roadways or cleared sidewalks will cause problems for both vehicles and pedestrians. Town Bylaw #90-68 covers this situation. It's usually best to speak with the neighbour and ask for cooperation. Failing that, the Authorities could have the snow and ice removed, at the offenders expense. Why not suggest hiring a local youth to do a thorough snow job?

Speaking of Snow
Question: "What's with drivers who just scrape clean a tiny spot on their windshield. Then drive down the road waiting for the heater to warm-up and clean the rest of the windows. They can't possibly see behind, or beside their car."
Answer: You are absolutely right. The drivers of those cars can't see to the rear or side of their vehicles. They have a very limited view to the front. There is no excuse for this type of behaviour. It is the drivers responsibility to ensure they have a clear unobstructed view to the front, sides and rear of their vehicle. Sections of the Highway Traffic Act or Criminal Code could apply to the above situation.
I ask that all drivers make the time to properly clean all vehicle windows, (the taillights and headlamps too) before driving.
Make winter safer for everyone.

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