Council approvals speed Acton East developments

Good news for homebuyers in Acton East following two significant approvals by Town Council on Monday night.

Removal of a holding provision on part of the so-called Coscan subdivision, on the south side of Highway 7, means the development is ready to be registered, a final step before building permits can be issued and construction can begin. Removal of the holding provision covers 235 of the development's total 441 approved lots in the Devon Place development.

As well, Town Council has approved, with conditions, a draft plan of subdivision on the north side of Highway 7. Rinarin's Honeyfield development includes 227 single-family homes, parkland, open space, landscaped areas and an area marked for future development.

Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette said Council's votes on the two separate developments means Acton will finally grow, as anticipated.

"This means that we will meet Acton's Official Plan with a population of up to, just over 10,000 people which was the expectations of the community for at least the last 10 years," Bonnette said after the meeting.

"These are significant events. Removal of the holding provision for Devon Place paves the way for construction, and people have been waiting for their homes to be built," he said, adding it's a good news story.

"First we had the arena (built) and then the plaza and these approvals fit the last pieces of the puzzle of Acton."

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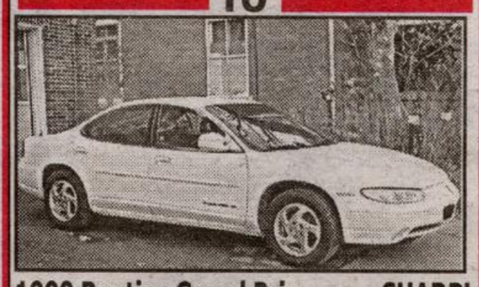
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Hydro bill complaints flood local office

QUEEN'S JUBILEE MEDAL: Halton MP Julian Reed pins a medal on Mae Hoare while fellow recipient George Henderson, right, the other Actonian honoured gives his approval. The Acton pair were among 20 honoured with medals at a ceremony in Milton on October 20. More on Page 4.

Field 2,900 calls from customers

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

The hottest summer in 50 years and the opening of the hydro market to competition have doubled and tripled some hydro bills and "inundated" Halton Hills Hydro (HHH) with phone calls from consumers wondering why their bills are so high.

HHH officials said they have fielded 2,900 calls from customers in the past five weeks, many concerned and upset about their bills. HHH has 16,085 residential and 1,692 commercial customers, including Acton Subway franchisee Gus Galimanas who said his monthly hydro bill in September was $750, up from approximately $400 from May.

"It's the same at Milton Subway and all across the province. It's because of what the province did, opening the market, not Halton Hills Hydro," Galimanas said recently,

Continued on Page 2

Turn the lights off - Bonnette

With winter coming and many consumers, including seniors, concerned about "soaring" hydro rates, Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette wants Town staff to try to find ways to reduce electricity usage in Halton Hills, without compromising public safety.

Bonnette said the Town may already be energy efficient, but wants to know if there are lights that could be turned off when not needed, pointing to lights that were left on at an unused sports field last week.

"I think that way we are showing an example to the community of conserving energy," Bonnette said at Council on Monday.

Town CAO Steve Andrews said staff have already done a lot of work to reduce usage, but will take another look at energy source controls.

Noting that the Town owns Halton Hills Hydro and therefore gets blamed for bill increases when it's a provincial issue, Georgetown Councillor Ron Chatten said people don't clearly understand deregulation.

Chatten said energy efficiency at the Town won't help seniors or single moms who don't understand why they are "using less (electricity) but paying triple." He asked if Council should get some feedback from staff on why people are facing large increases in their hydro bills.

Andrews said the Town has asked Halton Hills Hydro to again put out information to consumers to explain the situation with deregulation of the energy market, including repayment of the former Ontario Hydro's so-called stranded debt.

Continued on Page 3

HELPING THE HUNGRY: Calvinist Cadets Nathan (left) and Jared Reinders helped collect some of the over 10,000-pounds of food that was donated during the 12th annual Scout/Guide/Cadet food drive on Saturday. The food will stock the shelves at Acton's FoodShare food bank. – *Frances Niblock photo*

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