

Town jumps starts 401 corridor development

Trinity United Church

Silent Auction & Penny Table with Potluck Dessert

Saturday February 7th
at 7:00 p.m.

Items may be dropped off
at the church:
Thursday and Friday
10am-4pm;
Or Saturday
10am-12noon



CALL 853-2090 FOR MORE INFORMATION

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Town Council will spend \$1.5-million to fast-track development of a portion of the 401-Steeles Avenue industrial corridor in Halton Hills on Steeles Avenue, east of the Fifth Line.

That money, combined with \$1-million in pre-paid development charges from Mold-Masters, and Halton's agreement to use area development fees to extend the services, will kick start much needed industrial development in Halton Hills, according to Mayor Rick Bonnette.

Before unanimous approval of the financing plan last Mon-

day at Council, Bonnette said he was "delighted" to see the report come forward, adding the approval to upfront \$1.5-million of the \$2.2-million cost to extend the watermain, will probably be the biggest decision made by Council during this term of office.

While Halton is committed to bringing water and wastewater services along Steeles Avenue easterly to the Fifth Line this year, this agreement will allow Mold-masters to develop, with municipal water but not sewers, its property further east towards Trafalgar Road for a new corporate headquarters and production plant as much as six years sooner

than anticipated.

"This is a real opportunity," Bonnette said, pointing out that the Town faces a 10 per cent tax increase because it does not have a strong industrial/commercial tax base, which corridor development will provide.

Ward two Councillor Joan Robson agreed the ensuing industrial development would help the Town's undernourished tax coffers.

Regional and local Coun-

cillor Jane Fogal said the gap in the industrial/residential tax ratio would shift in favour of homeowners as the water pipe stretches to Trafalgar Road, and thanked the Region and Mold-Masters for their contributions.

"For us, it's a strategic investment," Fogal said, acknowledging that the \$1.5-million would affect the Town's already tight capital program, but "we have to keep moving."

Region recommends 1.6% tax increase

Halton Regional Council approved the 2004 Operating and Capital Budget, recommending a 1.6 per cent property tax increase, and an increase of 9.1 per cent for water and sewer utility rates. Regional Council will consider the Police Services budget, which is also funded through property taxes, at an upcoming meeting. If the preliminary Police Services budget is approved, the property tax increase will total 4.0 per cent for all Regional programs and services.

The Region accounts for approximately 41 per cent of a Halton homeowner's property tax bill (of which approximately 29 per cent is for Regional services and 11 per cent for Police Services). The other portions are education (approximately 29 per cent) and the city or town (approximately 31 per cent) based on the 2003 property tax bills.

For a homeowner with a property assessed at \$250,000, the property tax increase related to Regional programs and services will be approximately \$13.50 for the average homeowner. An additional amount will be required for Police Services. The impact of the combined water and sewer bill will be approximately \$46.62 per year for a typical household.

Highlights of the 2004 Budget include:

- \$3.5 million to the Regional Roads Program for additional funding for the Road's Capital Program, including major requirements for Regional Road 5 and Regional Road 25;
- \$3.9 million to the Expansion of the Regional Road Network to include all major

arterial roads in the Region, as the result of a roads rationalization process undertaken with the Area Municipalities. All roads, other than major arterial roads, were transferred to the Area Municipalities;

- \$5.6 million to the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System (OMERS) for the reintroduction of full OMERS contributions for the tax, rate and Police;

- \$2.5 million to Waste Management for the introduction of new services for the community, mainly focused on waste reduction and recycling;

- \$741,300 to two new long-term Care Facilities. In 2004, Creek Way Village in Burlington and Post Inn Village in Oakville will open for operation;

- \$1.2 million to Enhanced Public Health Demand, as the Health Department is experiencing significant pressures with respect to Public Health infrastructure, including communicable disease, environmental health and risk management.

"Regional staff have done an exceptional job in preparing the 2004 Budget", says Brent Marshall, Halton's Chief Administrative Officer. "I am pleased to say that we have created a budget that we believe is fiscally responsible, and will provide Halton residents with excellent value for their tax dollars."

Halton is home to more than 375,220 residents, all of whom use Regional services. The Region is also responsible for the management and delivery of water and sewer services. These rates are separate from property tax bills, appearing on the bills provided by the local hydro utility providers.

FISHERMAN'S LANDING

Rockwood

Phone: 856-4950



"The BEST Fish & Chips"
in Rockwood and all
surrounding areas.

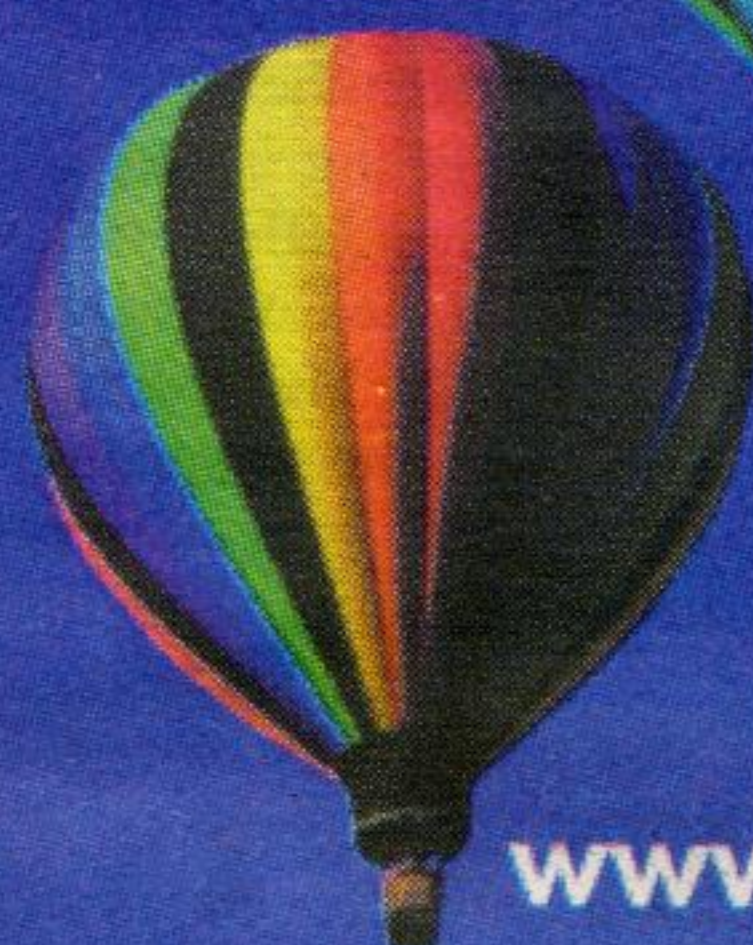
Phone-in orders accepted Eat-in or Take-out

HOURS: Wed, Thurs. & Sat. 11:00 - 7:30
Fri. 11:00 - 8:30

Prosperity
ONE

Loans at Prime

At Prosperity ONE
we can help
your money
SOAR



www.prosperityone.ca

for GICs,
Premium
Escalator
Term Deposits,
RRSPs &
Mutual Funds

Ask about

"Take 10"
RRSP Loans

- Take 10 years to repay
- Affordable payments
- Top up your "carry forward" contributions

Acton
519.853.0911

Georgetown
905-877.6926

Milton
905.878.4168