

Plea for grass roots' support for Georgetown Hospital



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PUBLIC NOTICE

REGARDING A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO SIGN

BYLAW 2003-0065 AS AMENDED

The Town of Halton Hills is proposing to pass a By-Law to amend Town of Halton Hills Sign By-law 2003-0065 as amended, pursuant to the Municipal Act 2001.

Council at their meeting on April 19, 2004 considered Report No. BLDG 2004-0012 approved the recommendation "that Council adopts the draft amendment to the Sign By-law 2003-0065 as contained in Report No. BLDG 2004-0012 and that staff provides public notice of the Town's intention to pass the draft amendment.

Council is proposing to amend Sign By-law 2003-0065 to permit signs having electronic message centres having stationary illumination of information and changes in not less than 4 hour intervals and a time, date or temperature sign having intermittent information changes not less than 10 second intervals.

Should you wish to address Council at the May 31, 2004 meeting, please contact 905-873-2601, ext.2333 to register as a delegation. Copies of the draft amendment by-law the will go before Council on May 31, 2004 will be available at the Town Clerk's office on May 28, 2004.

Further information is available by contacting Rob Ustrzycki in Building, Zoning and Enforcement Services (905) 873-02601, ext.2338 or by e-mail at bobu@haltonhills.ca

1 Halton Hills Drive, Halton Hills, ON L7G 5G2

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Speak up, or lose vital local health care services.

That's the blunt diagnosis from three disgruntled doctors looking for help to stop the announced closures of the obstetrics and pediatrics units at the Georgetown campus of the William Osler Health Centre.

At Council on Monday, the doctors, supported by several of their colleagues and a handful of nurses in the public gallery, urged Council and citi-

zens to lobby the Osler board of directors and the Ministry of Health to try to save the units, slated for closure on July 5.

Georgetown Dr. Jeff Sutherland called the closures a threat to acute medical care in Halton Hills, and urged citizens to reclaim a say in health care, because this could just be the beginning of more corporate, not health care based decisions that are made.

"We could maybe see the loss of after-hours surgical coverage at the Georgetown Hospital campus," Dr. Sutherland warned, adding its not "Doomsday talk" but a real assessment of what could happen as WOHC deals with a \$27-million deficit and a "sour" relationship with the Ministry of Health.

He said the closed observation unit could be at risk, and the hospital turned into a rehabilitation centre, all at the expense of patients who could be transferred to the already overcrowded Brampton facility for treatment.

Dr. Craig Carson said there has already been an "unfortunate erosion" of services in Georgetown, including loss of the intensive care unit.

"What's next? Our general surgery, or our 24-hour emergency room?" he said, adding the cuts will affect their ability to care for patients, and their ability to attract and retain new physicians.

Armed with a pile of medical studies, and the contention she wasn't being emotional or theatrical, Dr. Debbie Zeni argued that "decreasing health care availability will adversely affect the women, babies and children from this community."

Dr. Zeni quoted a 1999 Canadian Medical Association study that showed babies of women forced to travel to give birth have greater rates of perinatal death and prematurity and incur higher health care costs.

"This is the scientific proof that impeding access to care...actually costs the health care system," Dr. Zeni said, adding there are lifetime con-

sequences to proving poor health care "which is being promoted by our hospital board."

"The best interest of our community is not at the heart of this decision. At the heart of this decision is simply the balancing of a budget demanded by a Ministry that has underfunded our hospital corporation," Dr. Zeni said, adding their efforts so far to have the closure decision reversed have fallen on deaf ears.

"If it (the closure decision) is going to be undone, it's going to be up to us - the community, the people (politicians) at the table here, in terms of personal representation at the Ministry level and at the board level," Dr. Zeni said adding Council should talk directly with hospital board members and the Minister and Deputy Minister of Health, and the community needs to talk to Town councillors, urging them to make personal appeals at the Ministry and board level.

Mayor Rick Bonnette thanked the doctors for their courage in speaking out against the board, and asked councillors to support a Notice of Motion asking the board of WOHC to reconsider the closures, and asking the Ministry of Health for money to keep the beds open.

"I think that many people around are feeling frustrated that our quality of life is being challenged, and I think its up to the community...to step up," Bonnette said, adding he already has a meeting set up this week with the CEO of WOHC.

Wards 3/4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal said she gave birth to two children in Georgetown and it "feels like home."

She said problems at the hospital began with the amalgamation of the hospitals and said they should de-amalgamate.

"Let's get out of there - let's get our hospital back and run it the way we want to run it," Fogal said, drawing claps from the gallery.

Wards 1/2 Regional Councillor Clark Somerville said the closures are the "proverbial shot cross the bow," and that there will be enough grassroots action to make sure it is not a done deal.

GEORGETOWN CINEMAS 3

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(Starts Friday)

2 **Troy** 14A
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(Brutal Violence-Not Recommended for young children)

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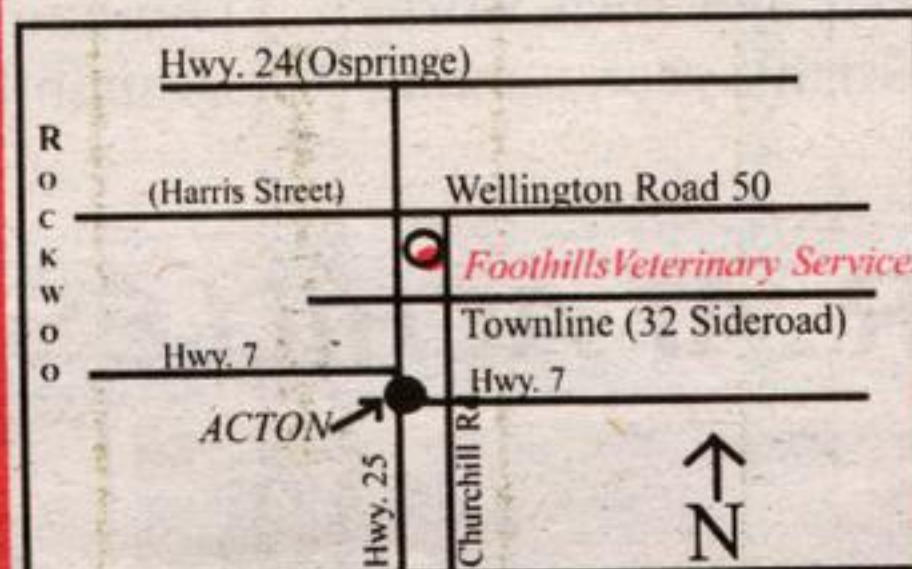


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Categories: 1) Pets in the garden, 2) Pets in costume, 3) Pets and kids
Submit your photos to our hospital by June 7/04. Winners to be announced at our open house on June 9 between 5-7.