

# Council reverses decision on Greenbelt land

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Bert Andrews, who with his family owns and runs Andrews Scenic Acres, said they need a farm viability plan before the greenbelt plan is approved.

"We can not and will not accept a 'trust me' philosophy from the government," Andrews said, adding farmland is traditionally the retirement package and borrowing package for farmers.

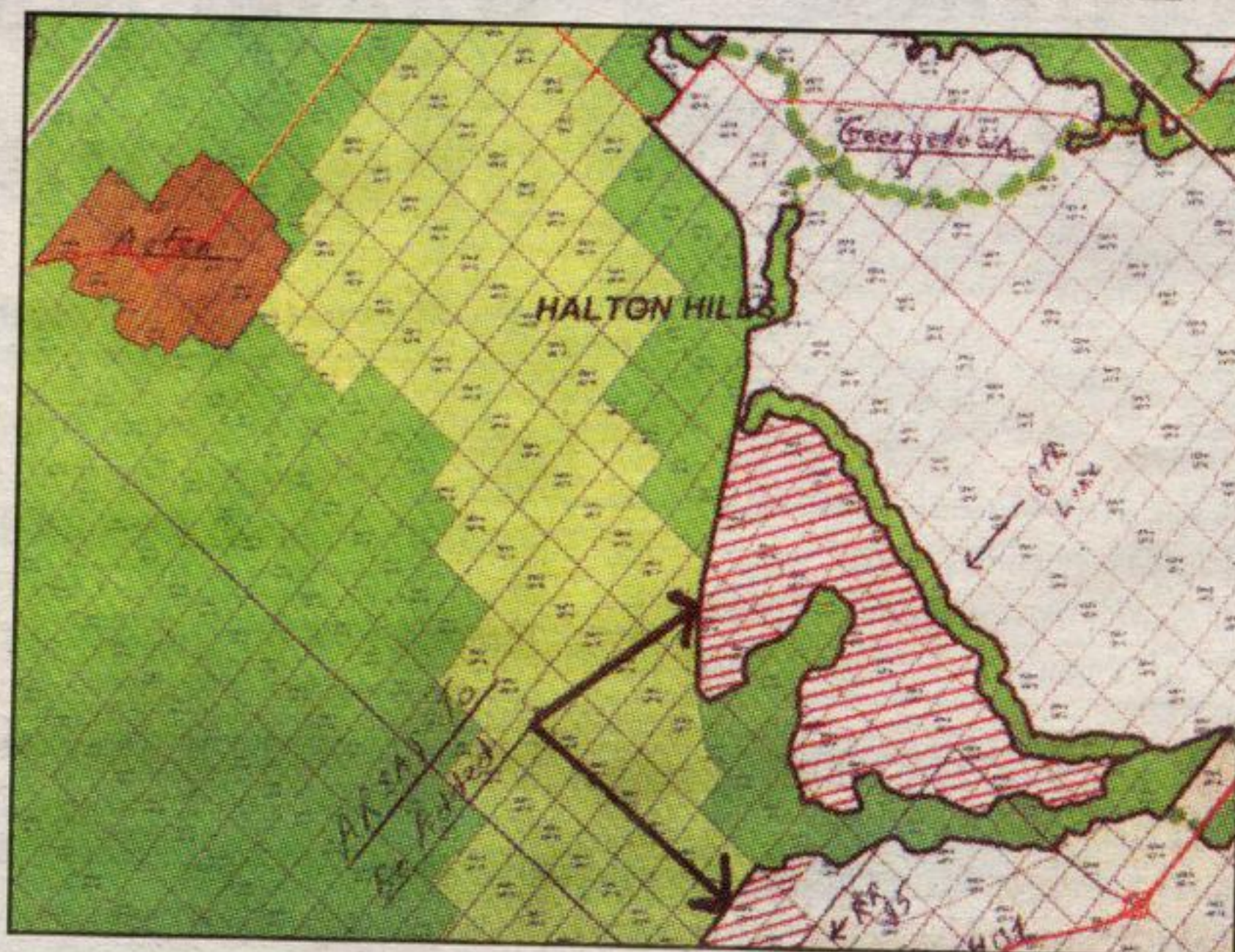
"Every farmer in Halton Hills expects his farmland value to be cut in half if a greenbelt is implemented and all farmers can't be wrong," he said, adding banks won't loan farmers enough money to cover their mortgage and operating loans if their equity is cut in half.

Environmentalist Leslie Adams said she supports Council's initial decision to add the additional land into the greenbelt because it looks to the future and looks out for the long-term impact on the community.

The effect of the greenbelt decision on young farmers was detailed by Ross McClure, who said he and his wife obtained a very large mortgage to purchase their family farm and become third generation farmers, a "day that may never come."

"We both work off the farm in order to pay our mortgage and all our bills. We have no extra funds put away for retirement - like most farmers, our land is our retirement fund," he said, adding the greenbelt will cut their land value in half and that puts them at risk of losing their farm if they need to borrow money because an appraisal would put the value of their land at substantially less than what they paid for it.

Wards 2/3 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal said they knew they were "throwing out a basic principle that was public consultation" when they made their earlier decision, but the decision was made



4,000 ACRES ARE IN RED

to protect an urban separator between Halton Hills and Milton.

She said a meeting with farmers earlier in the week re-enforced the position that the process of not talking to affected landowners was unfair, and that farm viability had to be permanent if the land in question was going to be open space permanently.

"I don't think we took away any property rights as far as what farmers

could do on their property because they only have the right to farm on it anyway. What we did take away is the right to due process..." Fogal said, adding if they are serious about including the land in question in a greenbelt, they can deal with the issue during the next review of their Official Plan, before the 10-year review of the greenbelt legislation.

Georgetown Councillor Moya Johnson admitted that she didn't have all of

the information when she made her decision to support asking the province to include the 4,000 acres.

"I'm not afraid to say I was wrong in making that decision and I'm not afraid to say that I'm going to change my mind because now I feel I do have more information and I'm prepared to make a different decision."

Georgetown councillor Mike Davis alone voted against reconsidering the issue calling it a "flip flop" that was bad for Council.

Acton Councillor Jon Hurst said he thought they were doing the farmers a favour when they recommended adding those additional lands to the greenbelt, and regrets that he made the decision with so little time for consultation and consideration.

Hurst also noted that when farmers rely on the value of their lands to provide a retirement package, they are actually speculating and they should

consider diversification.

Mayor Rick Bonnette said their earlier decision to recommend adding the land to the greenbelt was a rushed and not wise decision.

"He said he hopes that whoever is in power in 10 years time when the greenbelt legislation is slated for review, remembers the mistake of rushing into it."

As to the comment that council was flip-flopping Bonnette said, "If it is a flip flop because you got more information and you consulted and you listened, by God, that's a good flip flop, and this is what democracy is about, to listen to the people and I think we did that," Bonnette said, drawing claps from the crowd.

In a recorded vote, all councillors but Mike Davis voted to rescind the decision to ask Queens Park to include the additional land. Councillor Bob Inglis was absent.

## HHCSI Alert

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Friendly visitors are needed in both Georgetown and Acton. If you have one or two hours a week to provide companionship and conversation, we would be delighted to hear from you.

We need Meals on Wheels volunteers in Acton. This is a weekday morning activity once a week or once every two weeks. If you have time to pick up meals from Milton (between 10 - 11 a.m.) or if you have time to deliver Meals on Wheels (between 11 a.m. and noon) please call us for more information. All mileage expenses will be reimbursed.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call Marlene at 905-873-6502

### GOOD FOOD BOX PROGRAM

The Halton Hills West Seniors Planning, Education and Advisory Committee, with support from Halton Hills Community Support and Information, are bringing the Halton Good Food Box to Acton. The Halton Good Food Box provides affordable fresh fruit and vegetables for you and your family. The fresh produce will be packaged and delivered to local pick-up locations. To register, or for more information, call 519 853-3310.

### MAYOR BONNETTE'S LUNCH FOR YOUTH

Please join Mayor Rick Bonnette for lunch at Ares Restaurant on Friday, January 28<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 am to 1:00 p.m. The cost of attending the lunch will be \$30.00

per person. All proceeds from ticket sales will go to support Open Door Youth Centre in Georgetown and Off The Wall Youth Centre in Acton. Tickets can be purchased from: Ares Restaurant, Mayor Bonnette's office, or the offices of Halton Hills Community Support and Information (36 a Armstrong Avenue, Georgetown or 47 Mill Street East, Acton)

### LAUGHING OUT LOUD

The third Annual 'Laughing Out Loud' show will take place at the Acton Legion on Friday, Feb. 4 at 7:30 pm. Laughter will abound as graduates of Humber College Comedy Program entertain the audience with this adult comedy revue. The cost to attend the event is \$18 per person, and tickets can be purchased at Home Hardware in Acton or HHCSI's Georgetown Office (36a Armstrong Avenue).

### HHCSI'S CHAMPIONS FOR YOUTH GALA

Dance the night away to the 50's, 60's & 70's music of Rolly Rocker and The Hemi Heads! HHCSI's 5<sup>th</sup> Annual 'Champions For Youth Gala' will be held on Saturday, Feb. 19 at North Halton Golf and Country Club. Tickets are \$75 per person, which includes dinner, silent auction and entertainment by Brent Cooper (playing classical guitar) and our live band 'Rolly Rocker and The Hemi Heads'.

All proceeds from the event will support the youth centres of Halton Hills. For more information, or to order tickets, please call 905 873-6502, or drop by our office at 36a Armstrong Ave, Georgetown or 47 Mill St. E, Acton.



**LIGHTS BLINK?:** Wonder why your power shut off momentarily Wednesday morning around 8:20 a.m.? A truck clipped this hydro pole at the corner of Highway 7 and Regional Road 25 (Hwy 25) in order to avoid a head-on collision with the car ahead. Service quickly came back. Halton Hills Hydro were busy all day Wednesday putting in a replacement. - Ted Tyler Photo.

**The Regional Municipality of Halton**  
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## Halton Waste Management Calendar on its way to your mailbox!

**If you haven't already received your Halton Waste Management Calendar in your mailbox, be sure to keep checking for this handy reference guide. If you haven't received your calendar by January 21, limited supplies are available at:**

**Burlington**

- Burlington City Hall  
426 Brant Street  
Burlington
- Burlington Public Library Branches

**Oakville**

- Oakville Town Hall  
Information Desk  
1225 Trafalgar Road  
Oakville
- Oakville Public Library Branches

**Milton**

- Milton Town Hall  
43 Brown Street  
Milton
- Milton Public Library  
45 Bruce Street  
Milton

**Halton Hills**

- Halton Hills Town Hall  
1 Halton Hills Drive  
Georgetown
- Halton Hills Public Library  
Acton Branch  
17 River Street  
Acton
- Halton Hills Public Library  
Georgetown Branch  
9 Church Street  
Georgetown

The calendar, that has everything you need to know about waste collection in Halton for the year, including information about Blue Box collection, the Halton Waste Management Site, special collection days and more, is also available online at [www.region.halton.on.ca](http://www.region.halton.on.ca) or you may call to arrange for a calendar to be sent your way.

1151 Bronte Road, Oakville, ON L6M 3L1  
905-825-6000 Toll free: 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866) TTY 905-827-9833  
or visit us at: [www.region.halton.on.ca](http://www.region.halton.on.ca)