

Onus now on Halton Hills

Region compromises on Maple Ave.

By BRAD REAUME

Special to The Independent/Free Press

Halton regional council compromised when they instituted a temporary heavy truck ban on Maple Avenue.

During Wednesday morning's council meeting a number of amendments were introduced only to be defeated in favor of the ban agreed to at the committee level two weeks ago — heavy trucks will be banned between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. Monday through Friday, from noon to midnight on Saturday and all day Sunday on the regional road for one year. At the end of one year council will determine effects of the ban and institute further study or a permanent policy on Maple Avenue.

An additional provision puts the onus on Halton Hills town council to investigate permanent solutions, such as reconstruction of the sidewalks and boulevards.

Council reconvened Wednesday after one minute of silence in tribute to Halton Hills councillor Bill Robson who collapsed and died of a heart attack moments after speaking on this issue last week. A lengthier memorial is planned for a later date.

Most Halton Hills councillors spoke of a dilemma regarding the

issue — the rights of commercial traffic, safety of school children, difficulty enforcing the ban and no viable alternative route.

Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson suggested no truck ban until the effects of traffic calming measures could be ascertained, or banning truck traffic until Christmas. The mayor noted any decision would not be completely right.



MARILYN SERJEANTSON

Halton Hills councillor John Day suggested an eight month ban, until the end of the school year, but added the previously debated school times 8-9 a.m. and 3-4 p.m. times.

Finally, council agreed to a suggestion by Councillor Rob MacIssac who said he would go with the committee's recommendation only if the ban was understood to be temporary and Halton Hills undertook to study the issue regarding the creation of boulevards and barriers.

MacIssac wondered if it was appropriate to have a truck ban on

regional roads which are supposed to be arteries between municipalities. There was some disagreement on where Halton's responsibilities ended and the local municipality's began. Halton Region is responsible for the roadway and the boulevard in the road allowance but not sidewalks. Along segments of Maple Avenue the sidewalk is immediately adjacent to the roadway.

"This suggests the problem in Georgetown is on the side of the road and not with the road itself," said Burlington councillor Ralph Scholtens.

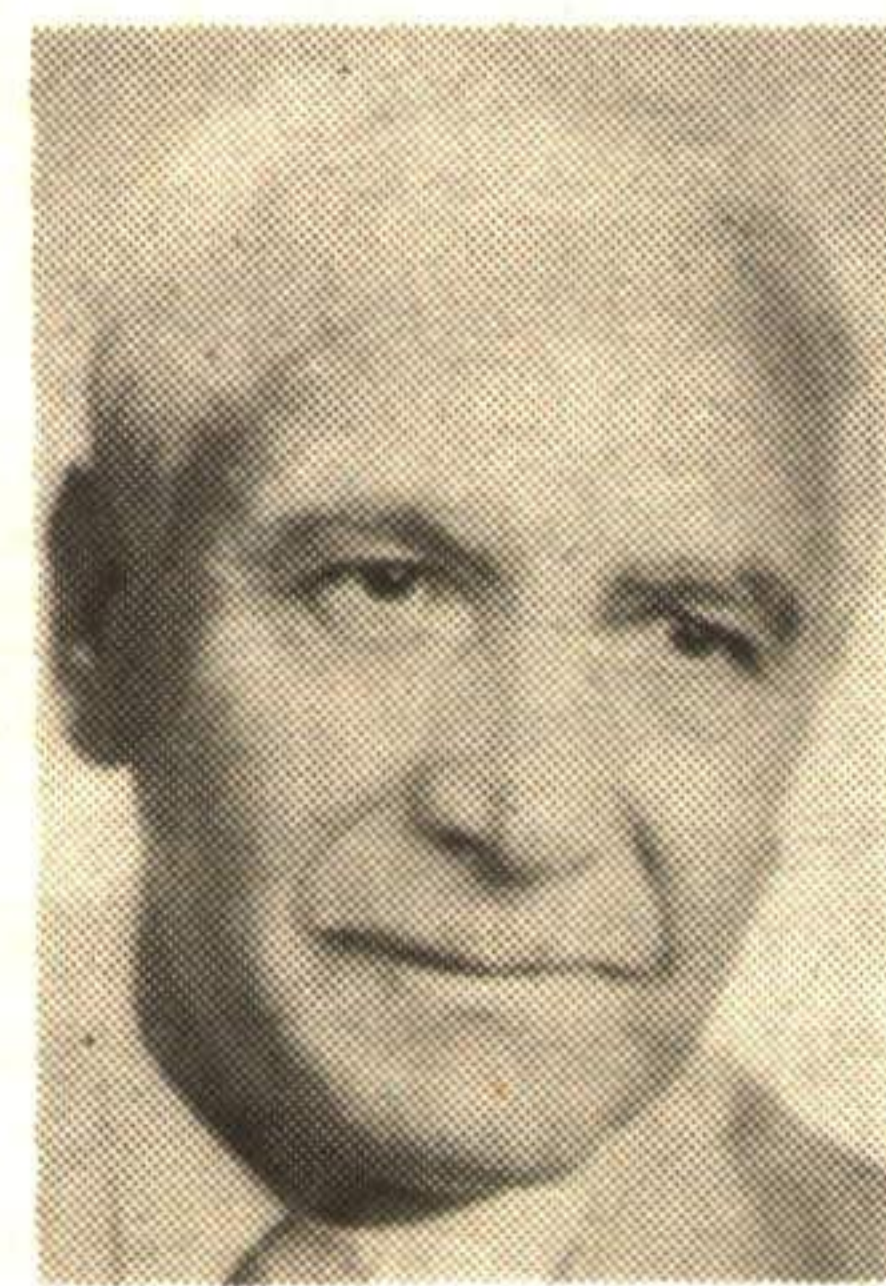
"It's a function of where the sidewalks are located," said MacIssac, who called for Halton Hills to fix the problem.

Council agreed at a previous meeting to make some cosmetic changes to the roadway in an attempt to calm traffic on the congested road. Maple Avenue is the major east-west access through Georgetown and is used by aggregate trucks and children attending two schools. Alternative routes also have schools and other institutional uses. Councillors felt that a more significant ban would have simply created problems on other arterial roads through Georgetown.

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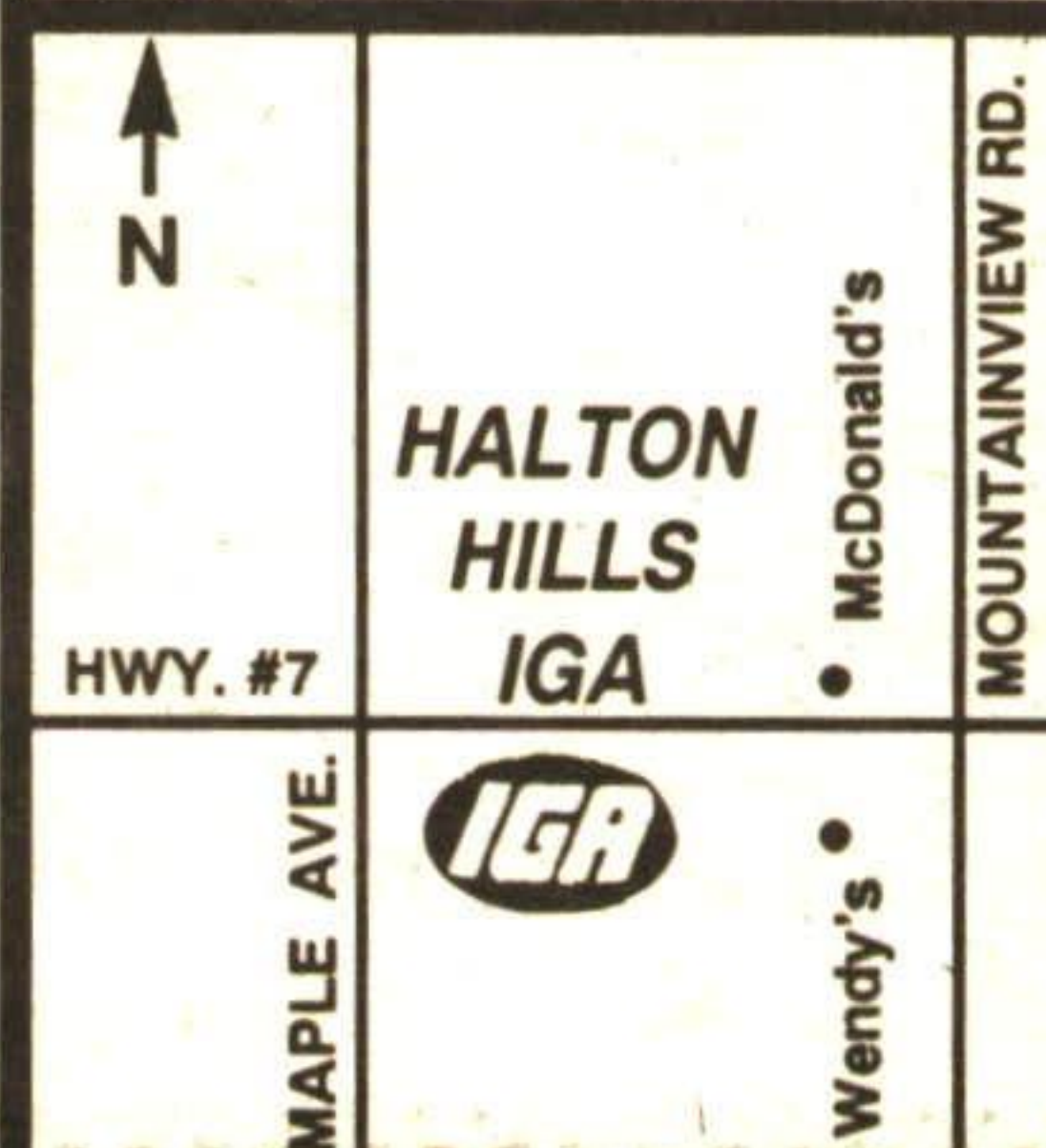
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