

Decision angers Acton group

Acton Arena has a date with the wrecker's ball

An Acton group failed to convince Halton Hills council to delay the demolition of the old arena in Prospect Park.

At Monday's general committee meeting, council accepted the tender for demolition of the 70-year-old building. A formal vote is required at the Oct. 26 council meeting. All three Acton councillors, Rick Bonnette, Norm Elliott and Clark Somerville, were alone in voting against demolition.

Elliott proposed a six month deferral, until May 1, 1999, to give time to a Heritage Acton/Acton Agricultural Society (HA/AAS) joint committee to do some winter fund-raising. Only the three Acton councillors supported the deferral.

The deferral proposal was prompted by a HA/AAS request at Monday's meeting to delay the demolition.

HA/AAS representative David Chapman told council, "I believe that the arena is worthy of saving. We would like an opportunity to spend the next couple of months to find money in the community." The group already has \$100,000 committed to the project.

However Tuesday morning, Chapman was angry about the council decision. "I am frustrated because I believe everybody's minds were made up going into the meeting last night," said Chapman. "I believe the town staff are so biased they presented everything in as negative light as they possibly could just to get their agenda passed. The councillors, who I really feel should represent the wishes of the entire community, are ignoring the



The old Acton Arena, located in Prospect Park, is slated for demolition, unless Halton Hills councillors change their minds at the next council meeting, Oct. 26.

obvious wishes of the Acton community in allowing us time to put together a proposal to get the money to help save the building."

At issue for many of the councillors was the estimated \$60,000 to \$100,000 cost for securing the arena during the winter months. This includes propping up the roof to prevent collapse by snow, securing the roof deck to prevent the wind blowing the steel shingles off, and a

high chain link fence around the perimeter to prevent vandalism, said Paul Stover, town manager of facilities.

However Chapman scoffed at those estimates.

"Let the building sit there for the winter... the likelihood of this building falling down is really light. Less than a year ago that building was just fine for kids being in it," said Chapman.

That building hasn't deteriorated that much, he said. "The need for the shoring I really question, and I propose that we need to find a second opinion."

"I am a major taxpayer in Acton, I am a major employer in Acton. I actually feel hurt, betrayed, devastated, angry, and a

lot of other things," said Chapman, owner of Purity Life Products. "They (the councillors) talk about being responsible and I believe the responsible thing would have been to get other advice as to this great need to protect the building."

Chapman said he was unaware, as of yet, of any further steps the group may take to prevent the arena's demolition.

"This building is a part of the heritage of Acton... and we owe it to them to see if they can save it," said Somerville. He said safeguarding the building for six months would only cost each Halton Hills resident about \$2.50.

Bonnette called it an emotional issue for the people of Acton, pointing out a major fund-raising drive held in the town during the building's construction.

However Georgetown Councillor Jane Fogal said she was not elected to make emotional decisions but to be as rational as possible about spending taxpayers' money.

Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson said she had decided to support the deferral until hearing about the price tag to winterize the building.

The demolition has been awarded to Marrex Construction and Excavating Ltd. of Caledon for \$37,878. Bids range from Marrex's low to a high of \$174,900.

If demolition is formally approved next week, the next step (after the demolition) will be developing a master site plan for Prospect Park, taking into consideration the needs of the Acton Agricultural Society during fall fair time.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer



RICK BONNETTE
'An emotional issue'

Obituary

Fran Jamieson dedicated to preventative health

Longtime Georgetown resident Fran Jamieson, who spent more than 35 years in public health nursing, died at Toronto General Hospital Monday of complications related to diabetes. She was 74.

Fran is survived by her husband Frank, daughter Gail and her husband Karl Mihalek of Saratoga Springs, New York, her son Phil and his wife Arlene of Mississauga, and her grandchildren Greg and Chrissy Mihalek.



FRAN JAMIESON

Fran spent much of her career in Halton's Health Department and before she retired in 1986 had worked as the administrator of the homecare program for five years. During her career she also worked as a public health nurse in Muskoka and as a plant nurse in Terrace Bay, where she met her husband. Frank said they moved to Georgetown in 1954 and the couple would have been married 47 years later this month. He said they had "a tremendous marriage." He said his wife "was a great expounder of preventative medicine." He remembered when she used to hold pre-natal clinics in Georgetown. He said she returned to school when she was 50 years old to study nursing supervision at Dalhousie University and when she graduated returned to the Halton Health Department.

Friends will be received at the J.S. Jones and Son Funeral Home today (Wednesday), 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. The funeral service will be held in the chapel on Thursday at 1:30 p.m.

What You Said

'There have been several attacks by dogs this summer, primarily by pitbulls and rottweilers. What would you recommend be done to see these attacks decreased?'



Joyce Caldwell-Grozier, alternative medicine practitioner, Terra Cotta

"Owners have to be more responsible. I have a rottweiler myself. At a party, an animal should be put in a bedroom...so they are away from the excitement or any children. You're protecting the people and the animal."



David Macfarlane, retired, Georgetown

"If the dogs run wild, they should be done away with. But if they are under control and muzzled, they should be safe."



Tony Littlejohn, fire alarm inspector, Burlington

"I think those dogs should be banned. It's a North American issue. I just moved here from Halifax, and they have the same problem there. They are dangerous animals, totally unpredictable."



Scott Ezekiel, shipper/receiver, Georgetown

"They're violent and there should be more control over them. If people want to own them, they should have to get a special licence."



Rick Vivian, shipper/receiver, Georgetown

"They need better training of the animals, but it doesn't affect me, so I don't think it's that big of a deal."



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