

Group opposes housing development

Movement to save ravine is growing

Momentum is growing in opposition to a proposed development along the Hungry Hollow ravine, says a local citizens' group.

SOR (Save Our Ravines) already has more than 1,000 names on a petition opposing a Halton Hills Village Homes Inc. (HHVHI) and Silver Creek Estates proposal to build 503 homes on Main St. S. lands bordering the Hungry Hollow ravine.

"We will take this petition to council to prove we're more than a small group of citizens," said SOR spokesperson Bert Zonneveld.

The group is well organized. With a core working committee of about a dozen people, SOR has blanketed Georgetown with 6,000 flyers, set up information booths in Georgetown Marketplace and developed a Web site: www.ravine.castle.on.ca. SOR is also ordering lawn signs to alert people to the development, Zonneveld said.

The group is receiving advice from a lawyer, environmentalist and marine biologist and has begun initial discussions with a hydrogeologist. It's also collecting donations to pay for expert witnesses at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearing.

SOR has set up a telephone committee, says Zonneveld, which will allow the group to mobilize a lot of people to the town's special public meeting on the proposal, to be held

April 26, 7 p.m. at Georgetown High School. Zonneveld said SOR wants a large turnout to demonstrate its commitment and support.

HHVHI held two open house nights about the proposal in early February and Zonneveld said he would describe them as a "farce". While SOR didn't urge residents to boycott the open houses, committee members still weren't satisfied with the developer's answers to their questions, he said.

SOR has a problem with where HHVHI is building the homes and Zonneveld said a more critical eye should be put on the boundary of the ravine. "The buffers should be increased between the slopes and the ESAs (Environmentally Sensitive Areas)."

However, according to HHVHI's Roy Hylkema, manager of urban development for KMK Consultants, there will be about 100 to 300 feet between the regional floodline and the lot lines. Of the 260-acre property, only 79 will be developed into homes, he said. All the wetlands will be conserved, as well as the tableland forest off Miller Dr.

Anne MacMillan of Ecoplans, another HHVHI consultant, said that virtually all of the land to be developed has already been compromised by active agricultural areas/or abandoned fields. Some areas, already disturbed by farming, will be regenerated

with native plants and trees. She said Credit Valley Conservation defined both the top and the slopes of the ravine banks, the field boundaries of the ESAs for the HHVHI consultants. A subsequent site walk by the region's environment advisory committee endorsed the staking, she said.

However, Zonneveld said SOR wants a more detailed report on the cumulative impact on the ravine from existing and future development in the immediate area including this one (458 homes), HHVHI D-10 Phase 4 (196), Silver Creek Estates (35), Arbor Valley (166), Verdeux (250) and Kuryllowicz (200).

"How much more can this ecosystem take. Someone has to take stewardship of this land," said Zonneveld. He suggested the town should buy more of the land— it already has a \$50,000 deal to buy 163 acres from HHVHI this month.

SOR would also like the developer to work more hand in hand with local citizens and the town, but that didn't look promising after HHVHI went to the OMB for a decision one day after the November public meeting, Zonneveld said.

However in response to town planning concerns, the developer did reduce the number of lots originally planned to conform to provincial planning density requirements.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer



Ice-capades

"Bubblegum", from left, Megan Austriaco, Julie Boughton and Nadine Rostom, were among the skaters who entertained a packed house at the Acton Figure Skating Club's Circus Extravaganza Thursday. At right, a young skater waves to the audience at the Acton Arena and Community Centre.



Photos by Herb Garbutt

What You Said

'The provincial government has promised emergency room patients will not have to wait longer than 15 minutes to be assessed. Do you think Ontario hospitals can deliver on that promise?'



Warrick Noseworthy,
Erin, millwright

"With the staffing they have now, no."



Ramona Henderson,
Georgetown,
teacher candidate

"Georgetown can but I don't think the big (hospitals) can. There are just too many people coming in."



Susanne Muller,
Etobicoke,
marketing
co-ordinator

"Not all the time. I know because I've waited myself. Because of all the cut-backs, they need to hire more nurses and more administrative staff."



Ken Beam,
London, retired

"It's hard to say until you give them a chance to see what they can do."



Elizabeth Moffat,
Georgetown,
restaurant employee

"No, not from what I've been hearing on the news. They're understaffed and even though they're going to rehire, it's just the people they let go before."

Local man wins big in 6/49

Robert Saxby is going shopping for a new vehicle after winning \$136,101 in Saturday's Lotto 6/49 draw.

"The car I've got is pretty well worn out," the 66-year-old Georgetown resident said as he picked up his winnings on Monday. "That's about all I need right now. I'll put the rest in the bank and decide what to do with it later."

Saxby bought the winning ticket Saturday at the Esso in Hornby before going to the Toronto Raptors game. When he heard the numbers on the radio the next morning, they sounded very familiar.

"I knew I had four of them," he said. "But I didn't hear the rest." It turned out he had five numbers plus the bonus number to win the draw's second prize.

Though he doesn't play every week, Saxby does buy tickets frequently. He used the same numbers in Wednesday's draw and won \$20 but Saturday's payday will help him buy either a new Winstar or a Jimmy.

Gas attendant assaulted

Halton Police are investigating an incident that occurred at a Guelph St. gas station Thursday afternoon in which a 20-year-old Georgetown man was assaulted.

Police say at about 12:30 p.m. the victim, who works at the gas station, was assaulted by a former employee of the gas station. He was punched several times and was treated and released from Georgetown Hospital.

...
A 1996 Yamaha white and blue dirt bike was taken from an Eighth Line home sometime between March 15 and 29. The bike, which was last seen parked in front of the garage, is valued at \$2,500.

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