

The Independent & Free Press

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Showing solidarity

In Halton Hills where interests and opinions are so diverse, it is unique to see so many residents showing solidarity on one issue—to stop development on Main St. lands beside the Hungry Hollow ravine.

More than 400 residents showed up Monday night at a public meeting, and five months before about 250 turned out to the first public meeting. Audience members ranged from young children to senior citizens with the majority sitting through four hours of planners and environmentalists' speeches.

On Monday night, residents demanded council support their cause, and dangled their vote in the next election as a carrot.

It's obvious there are strong differing opinions on what constitutes the valley edge in the Hungry Hollow. Before a decision is made, perhaps some time should be taken to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Only last week, the majority of councillors refused to approve a developer's Official Plan amendment request, citing it was premature before a secondary plan of Glen Williams was completed. That developer had been waiting for four years for a decision to be made by the town—and will now have to wait at least another year.

A similar case could perhaps be made in this instance. Development on these Main St. lands could be deemed premature pending an Official Plan review which is about to get underway next month.

However, a position by the town is somewhat irrelevant. The developer, Halton Hills Village Homes Inc., has used its usual tactic of referring the issue to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). Like many other developments in this community, an unelected board will decide this town's future.

If the citizens of this town want this land saved from housing, they must show the same solidarity before the OMB they demonstrated at Monday's meeting. An unelected board cannot be swayed by threats of a voter boycott, but it could make them sit up and realize there's more than a group of developers and lawyers in the room.



Acton Jr. Y appreciative

Dear editor,

The Acton Junior YMCA would like to thank the following businesses and people for their support for our Silent Auction: The Olde Hide House, Country Reflections, Godfather's Pizza, Profile, Doll Emporium, Subway, Acton Bowling Lanes, Acton IGA, Power Entertainment, Butcher's Furniture, Wetherby's, Macmillan's, Mississauga Volkswagen, Ethel Martin, Sue Dudas-Avon, Robb Family, Tim Horton's and Subway. The Silent Auction raised \$477 towards our Community Fund. Thanks to Helen Kirkwood for her support and efforts.

Brenda Quinn,
Director

Top citizens say thanks

Dear editor,

To all our friends for many phone calls, handshakes, cards, to Optimist members, Hockey Heritage recipients, past Citizens of the Year, Bennett Chronic Care friends and co-workers, representatives from government and not forgetting the chef and waitresses for our lovely meal.

To the Lions Club for selecting us as Citizens of the Year and giving us such a special evening and to the consideration to the seating of our family to make us more welcome. A night to remember.

We thank you all.

Shell and May Lawr

Letter of the day

Input is needed on exotic pets

(This letter was originally sent to the Town of Halton Hills, and a copy was made available to the Independent and Free Press.)

Dear Mr. (Ron) Stein (bylaw enforcement officer),

As president of HEPA, Halton Exotic Pet Association, I implore you to please consider this letter seriously before an exotic pet bylaw is considered.

First of all, why do we need a bylaw at all? Is it to ensure the safety of the public? There has not been even one reported incident of any injury caused by an exotic pet in Halton Hills, ever. If the need to ensure public safety is the issue, then cats and dogs would never be able to pass that criteria. Would cats and dogs be banned because they are too dangerous? Council can not discriminate against one group of animals and make exceptions for others. No one would ever suggest banning dogs or cats, but it seems that many people have no such hesitation banning exotic animals.

If the proposed bylaw is to pacify the ignorant who do not want anyone to own exotic pets, then that would be illegal under the Ontario Human Rights charter as well as the federal Charter of Rights. No one can be discriminated against by reason of age, sex, gender, religion, ethnicity or culture. One's choice of pet is often based on one's cultural or ethnic background.

As president of HEPA, I implore you to involve our membership in any drafts of proposed bylaw legislation and ensure that proper public input is given to this very important matter. Many of our members are highly educated experts in many fields such as zoology, veterinary care and education. We realize that standards of care and husbandry are needed, but no one has the right to say that in the privacy of one's own home that they are not allowed to keep the pet of their choice.

Steve Edgar, president, HEPA

Our Readers Write

The Independent & Free Press welcomes letters to the editor from our readers. All letters must be signed and include an address and a daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for content or length and can be mailed, delivered to our office address at 211 Armstrong Ave., Georgetown, Ont., L7G 4X5, faxed to us at (905) 873-0398 or e-mailed to: independent.freepress@aztec-net.com