

Council offers unanimous support for 'Leathertown Centre' proposal

A plan to develop a "Leathertown Centre" focused around the olde Hide House was supported unanimously—in principle—by Halton Hills council at its meeting last week.

"The olde Hide House should be applauded for their vision and creativity," said Acton Councillor Rick Bonnette. "This will be exciting and deserves merit. We're looking at a process that needs to be followed; there will be reports and public meetings, but this is an important first step to get this proposal on track."

Mayor Kathy Gastle agreed. "We will continue to work with you, and for you, and hopefully we can see this proposal come to fruition," said the mayor. The approval in principle is a new process for the town and "allows the proponents (olde Hide House) to move forward with some level of confidence."

Noting that since 1980 the olde Hide House (OHH) has attracted about four million visitors to Halton Hills, OHH president Steve Dawkins told councillors, "We very much want to take now what is limited to 49 Eastern Ave. (the olde Hide House) and turn that into an anchor for a broadened destination point."

This is a defensive measure as much as it is an expansion plan, said Dawkins, because retailers are now competing for shoppers' time,

as well as dollars. Therefore the olde Hide House management believes it must broaden the "retail experience" to continue to make it "worth the drive to Acton".

Dawkins said the Hide House has recovered from the "tumultuous 90s" and learned a lot of lessons, "and we certainly don't ever again want to get a situation where the continued existence of the operation comes into question."

Therefore, the expansion will be, as Dawkins phrased it, "walking rather than running." It will begin this spring/summer with an upgrading of Eastern Ave. and landscaping and paving of the parking lot.

Dawkins sought an approval "in principle" from town council so that olde Hide House's financial backers can be assured of municipal support before proceeding too far into the project.

Keynotes are: a 7,600 sq. ft. development on the southwest corner of Eastern Ave. and Church St. and a 20,000 sq. ft. development, bounded by Mill St., Church St. and Eastern Ave. as well as increased landscaping and parking improvements.

Dawkins said the new buildings will be occupied by businesses that elaborate on the leather theme—for example, luggage, furniture, apparel, home and garden accents. That could be also extended to other "natural" products such as wool, alpaca, cashmere, etc.

"We haven't decided yet whether we would be operating most, or all, or any, of the additional space ourselves," said Dawkins. "We haven't ruled out the idea of trying to find other unique operations, which would add materially to the drawing power."

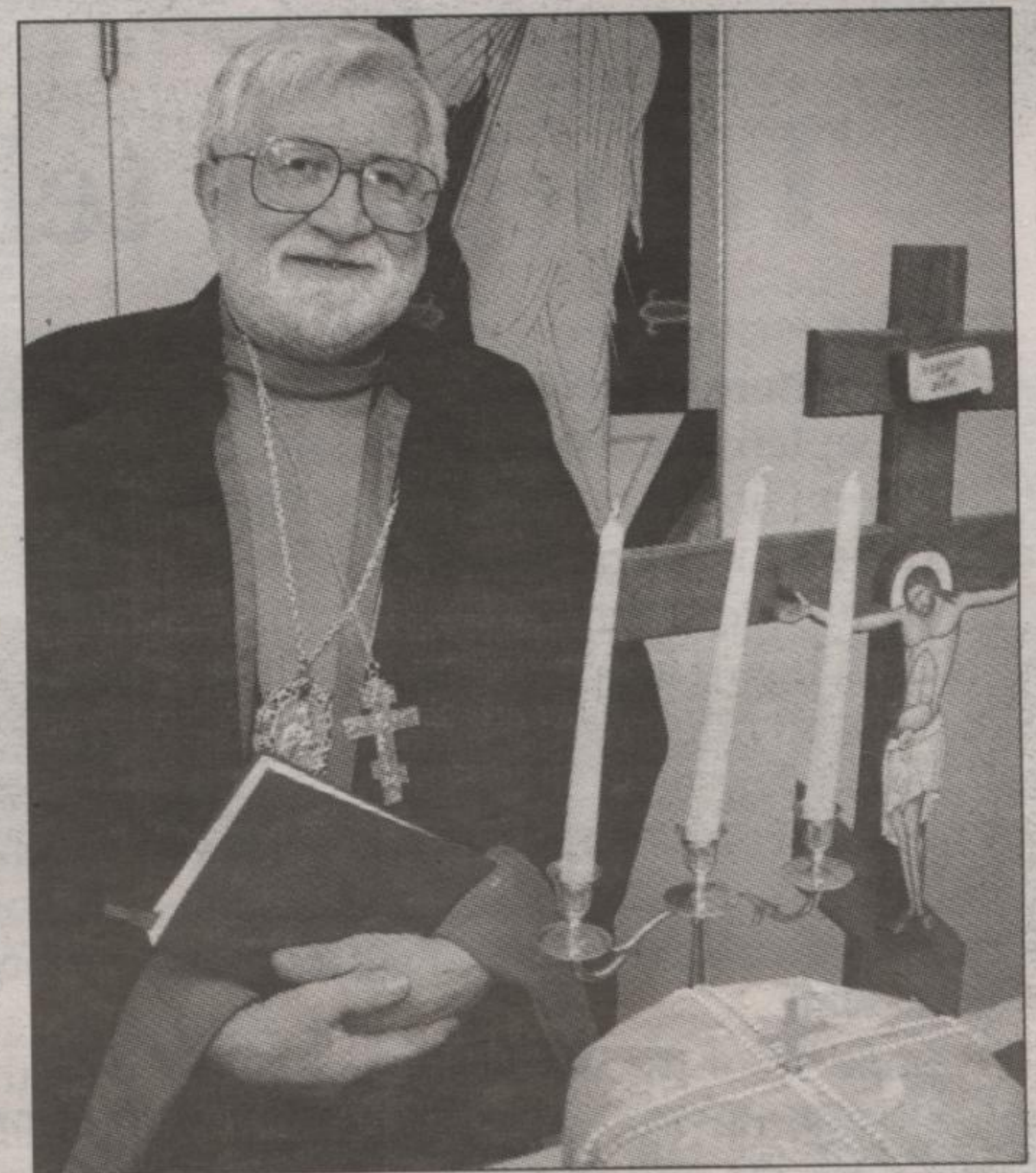
He suggested specialized retailers such as a L.L. Bean could complement the project—however the OHH has no interest in regular retailers (although interest has been expressed).

Council confirmed in principle:

- The relocation and widening of Eastern Ave. (This isn't in the budget forecast, so the OHH may have to pay up front and be reimbursed later.)
- The parking be consolidated on the east side of Eastern Ave.
- The potential closing and sale of Fellows St. between Church St. and Mill St.
- The filing and processing of appropriate planning applications
- The economic development officer will work with the olde Hide House and town and region staff to keep the project moving. (There are currently water and wastewater servicing constraints and the OHH will have to work with Halton Region to solve that situation).

All phases of the project may require town approvals and public input.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer



Come in and pray

Archbishop Yaroslav Sereda was on hand to welcome visitors to the newly-opened Orthodox Church of Canada Mission Parish of Christ The Lord of Mercy, located at 72-74 Mill St. in Georgetown. The church held an open house last weekend to mark the occasion.

Photo by John Bauld

Counterfeit bills passed

Five counterfeit \$100 bills were used to buy two Sony Playstation consoles at Wal-Mart Saturday afternoon. Halton Police are looking for two white males, about 20-years-old in connection with the incident. One was heavy set with short-spiked hair, the other was thin with blond hair.

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Two Halton Hills area youths were cautioned by police after a citizen saw two people knocking over newspaper boxes at Argyll Rd. and Mountainview Rd. early Saturday.



Royal Canadian Air Cadets
Georgetown 756 Squadron



Here are some frequently asked questions about Georgetown Air Cadets.

Q: How old do you have to be to join Air Cadets?
A: The minimum age is twelve, but no older than nineteen.

Q: Where do they meet?

A: The armouries on Todd Road (Parallel with Highway 7, between Mountainview and Sinclair)

Q: How much does it cost?

A: Free!!! Yes, even the snazzy uniform.

Please check us out on our Parade night, Monday evenings between 6:30 and 9:30

For more information contact

Captain Alison Murray at

873-2376

or weekdays

Phil or Wendy Miller

877-0596



By Cory Soal
R.H.A.D.

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2001 ACTON CITIZEN OF THE YEAR DINNER

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Janis Fread

May 4, 2001

6:30 p.m. Cocktails

7:15 Dinner

at

Blue Springs Golf Course

Tickets \$30.00

available at

Halton Hills Furniture,
Acton

or by calling

853-1653

No tickets will be sold at the door

Huttonville Lions Club

presents
Their Thirty-Sixth

Craft and Antique Show

at the
Huttonville Community School

on Saturday, April 7th and

Sunday, April 8th

from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Food and Beverages available

Collectables, Antique Furniture,

Arts and Crafts Displays

120 Dealers and Artisans

Bring the whole family and enjoy the show

Admission -Adults \$3.00



Hope to see you there!

Information:
Contact Huttonville Lions Club
P.O. Box 61 Huttonville, LOJ 1B0

Proceeds will be for Community Projects