

First municipal all-candidates meeting focus on pay increases and 401 Corrido

About 60 area residents took the opportunity to get to know the mayor, regional chairman and Wards 1/2 regional council hopefuls at the first municipal all-candidates meeting in Halton Hills Wednesday.

Participating in the meeting hosted by the Hornby Association of Rate Payers (HARP) in Hornby, were mayoralty candidates Rick Bonnette, John Day, Kathy Gastle and Marilyn Serjeantson, regional chair contenders Brian Burton, Anne Marsden and Joyce Savoline and Wards 1/2 regional council candidates Drew Riedstra and Clark Somerville. Rob Heaton, a regional chair candidate, did not attend.

After their opening remarks candidates took questions from the well-mannered audience.

The regional chair candidates were asked what their vision is for the north side of Steeles Ave.

Burton said "to tell you the truth I don't have one," who added he's been dealing more with issues south of the (Hwy.) 403.

"It wouldn't be my vision it would be the vision of the residents of Hornby," said Marsden.

Current chairman Savoline said what they don't want to do "is develop in a way were we give our destiny away to the OMB." She said that can be achieved by creating defensible plans that are inclusive of people, and development will be staged.

The regional candidates were also asked if they thought the recent pay raises for council members was justified.

Burton said he didn't think they were. While he believes the positions are current-

ly underpaid "the percentage increase to jammed through was excessive."

"I do think 60 per cent was a bit mus said Marsden.

"I don't ever remember considering a or 70 per cent pay increase, that was a conpletely distorted and incorrect figure it was floated out," said Savoline, who add she respects what the citizen's commithat looked at the salary issue did and don't disagree with their findings."

Wards 1/2 regional council candid Riedstra called the hike "a bit of a jun and Somerville, also a Wards 1/2 candid said having a citizen committee decide the increase "is the fairest way."

Mayoralty candidates also received the share of questions.

Day was asked why he hadn't attend a single meeting of the regional office plan steering committee in the past year?

Day, who explained he was also a me ber of the Halton Region Housi Advisory Committee, said he had attend at least one of the official plan committee meetings.

"The other gentleman who has be there has been representing and speak for me at that meeting," said Day.

Another audience member said consion, division and mistrust have been hallmark of council and civic office opetions for the past three years, and how de Gastle intend to resolve those problems?

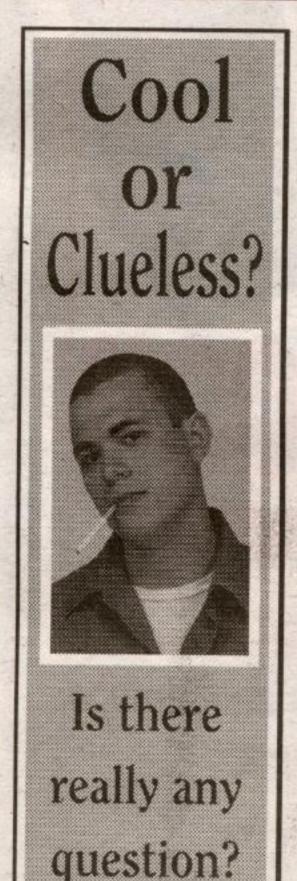
"I disagree with all of the adjectives the have been presented," said Gastle. "The not the case at all." She added that cour has achieved a lot over the past the years.

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