

Builder offers \$2,000 reward in bid to curb vandalism

The owner of a townhouse development under construction in downtown Georgetown is so frustrated with the vandalism he's been experiencing there he's put up a \$2,000 reward in the hope of catching whoever is responsible.

Nick Ferraro is building a 27-unit freehold townhouse development— Village Terraces— fronting onto James and Wesleyan Streets and has had to contend with thousands of dollars worth of vandalism.

Ferraro said since he began building the homes about a year ago an excavator has been spray painted on the site, six doors on homes under construction were kicked in, his son's dump truck was broken into and a fire extinguisher was set off in the interior, a box of nails was thrown on the road in front of the development, and 12 rolls of copper wire were stolen.

When asked how much money he's lost from the vandalism, he said it would be "depressing if I thought about that".

"It's a daily occurrence," said Ferraro. "So far, thank God I haven't had any damage inside the houses."

Ferraro said over the summer he had a security officer working nights at the site, which helped the situation, but he has since left.

"I've been trying to replace him. It's not easy to find somebody," he said.

Ferraro said he's contacted Halton Police numerous times to report the vandalism, but said they have told him there's nothing they can do.

However, Det. Const. Sue Bedard of Halton Police said in fact police are doing something to combat the increased vandalism in the area.

"The officers are aware of the damage in the area," said Bedard. "It is an identified problem area."

Bedard said police have not identified



Nick Ferraro, who is building a 27-unit freehold townhouse development in downtown Georgetown shows off a damaged door jamb. The builder has offered a \$2,000 reward in hopes of catching whoever is responsible for a recent spate of vandalism to the property.

Photo by Ted Brown

the person(s) responsible, but have implemented extra patrols and stops of people in the area.

She said the area has experienced an increase in car entries and damage such as rocks thrown through windows.

"It seems to be malicious," said Bedard.

Last May steel benches were tipped over, interlocking stone was pulled up and shrubs were uprooted at nearby Remembrance Park.

Despite police efforts, Ferraro has decided to take matters into his own hands and is offering the \$2,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a person or group of people responsible for the vandalism.

He's urging anyone with information to call him at 905-877-8963.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

Town budget discussions begin Soccer club donates \$100,000 towards construction of new field

The Acton Soccer Club kicked off the Town of Halton Hills' 2006 budget discussions on a good foot Monday night by announcing it was contributing \$100,000 towards the construction of a soccer field in Acton.

Club spokesperson, Ian Watson, told members of budget committee (all members of council), "This money is a great investment. ... Because this is what we have been saving for." All members of the club's executive voted in favour of the contribution, he said.

Watson was among the seven delegations that spoke on Public Night at budget committee. Others included community members advocating for town programs, not yet included in the 2006 budget.

Budget committee is considering a \$20 million budget—a 5 per cent increase over last year's budget. This works out to a \$50 increase on the average home assessed at \$300,000. Budget discussions continued last night (Tuesday) and will resume again on Jan. 30 and Jan. 31, with council approval scheduled for February 6.

Funding of \$500,000 for Phase 2 of the Acton Sports Park is included in the Recreation and Parks Department's 2006 capital budget.

The planned lit senior soccer field will be a first for the 800-member soccer club, which currently plays the majority of its games on school fields.

The club saved the money over the past 20 years from bingo proceeds.

Acton Regional Councillor Clark Somerville called the club's generosity, "visionary."

Other Acton projects included in the 2006 recreation capital budget are: Acton skateboard park, \$204,000; Acton East North Park, \$70,400 and Danville playground replacement and improvements to Fairview Cemetery.

Other delegations to budget committee included Ninth Line residents demanding immediate repairs for the "war zone"-like road, from 27 Sideroad to 32 Sideroad.

Resident spokesperson Tanya Parsley asked the Ninth Line project become a 2006 priority, stating the washboard road has no proper base or crown, resulting in dangerous conditions in inclement weather. Last year, she said the police considered closing the road in the winter due to unsafe driving condi-

tions, and this year some residents are not receiving their daily newspapers due to drivers' refusal to traverse the road.

Parsley cited numerous accidents, muddy and/or dusty conditions, car damage and stress on residents.

Gas tax funding is currently allocated to the project in 2008. Budget committee was expected to discuss the Ninth Line residents' request during last night's debate on the capital budget.

Dorothy Hunt of Arts Alive recounted the history of the arts in Halton Hills as she supported an operating budget extra: \$27,000 year-long 25th birthday celebrations for the Halton Hills' Cultural Centre with one big week, Oct. 16-22.

Christine Upton of HOPE (Healthy Options for the People and the Environment) threw her support behind a Recreation and Parks trial project on organic turf management. The one-year trial on a Trafalgar Rd. Sports Park soccer field is already included within the operating budget.

Belinda Gallagher, a member of the Old Seed House Garden group, updated budget committee on the status of the park in central Georgetown. As well, the group supported the Recreation and Parks Department's proposed Destination Park Policy that calls for the spending of \$18,000 for an irrigation system and remedial turf repair in the garden, and \$2,000 to implement the park policy on trial basis.

Tunde Otto-Harris, Willow Park Ecology Centre co-ordinator and Wayne Scott, chair of the Town's Environmental Advisory Committee, addressed budget committee on the status of their town-funded groups, and reiterated their need for their respective budgets: \$10,600 for Willow Park and \$2,700 for TEAC. However the groups did request a one-time donation of \$500 for a 100-youth environment conference to be led by the citizen environmental group, POWER, this spring.

Decisions on the residents' requests were made last night during the capital budget discussion (after press time) or will be made during budget nights on Jan. 30 and 31. Jan. 31 has also been selected as an evening of debate on the future fate of the Town of Halton Hills Public Library.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer

Councillor wants federal candidates to keep signs off town-owned lands

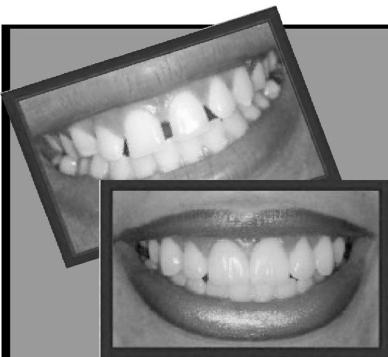
Halton Hills Regional Councillor Clark Somerville asked town staff to contact Wellington-Halton Hills candidates, to remind their supporters not to place election signs on Town-owned lands such as parkettes, the Acton fire station and Acton arena.

Somerville said he had contacted some candidates, who had placed signs on these Town lands, to ask for their removal, meeting with some success.

"One candidate's (campaign worker), a little overzealous, pounded some into where we had just put a new irrigation system for the (Acton downtown) parkette," said Somerville.


"I'm going to let (NDP Leader) Jack Layton know if our irrigation system is leaking in the spring; he's going to get a bill from the Acton BIA."

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer



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