

Council endorses provincial review of MPAC's property assessment method

The Town of Halton Hills has once again shown it is not a fan of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) as it has sent yet another resolution off to the Province—this time to the Office of the Ombudsman.

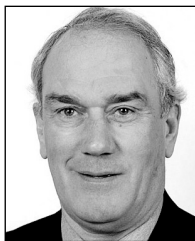
That office earlier this year announced it planned to investigate whether MPAC's assessment of properties was fair. Both Halton Region and the Town of Halton Hills have gone on record stating they were willing to be part of the Ombudsman's pilot project to test this.

The Town, and many of its residents, has always questioned the accuracy, fairness and transparency of MPAC's procedures.

Council has sent a number of resolutions in the past calling for a review of the agency, which establishes assessments of all properties in Ontario on which town taxes are based.

The latest resolution, brought forth by Ward 2 Councillor Bryan Lewis, and seconded by Mayor Rick Bonnette—the two key opponents of MPAC around the council table—endorses the Ombudsman's investigation.

"This is far more than just any one component of our town, virtually the whole town is affected (by MPAC's assessment judgments)," said Lewis, noting seniors on fixed incomes, rural and agricultural residents affected already by restrictive rules such the Greenbelt legislation and Niagara Escarpment Plan, and industry have



BRYAN LEWIS

already come to council to complain. "And we're willing to be part of a pilot project to see if there isn't something better."

"People in my ward (2) have called on numerous occasions, and I have particularly voiced concerns on how seniors have been assessed," said Councillor Joan Robson, "and hopefully this motion, by taking a different initiative in going to the Ombudsman, would perhaps yield some good results."

Ward 4 Councillor Bob Inglis agreed that the rural area and seniors have not been the only ones affected by MPAC's arbitrary decision-making, saying he, too, has received many calls from his ward's urban Georgetown residents.

"There are many difficulties and frustration from constituents on how the system is going and what it is doing," said Inglis.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer

Torch sets off minor roof blaze

Halton Hills firefighters were called to a Mill St. E. Acton building last Thursday morning for a fire on the roof that had ignited the wall of a rear apartment.

Firefighters extinguished the blaze on the roof and broke a window latch and glass in a door to enter the apartments and put out the blaze that caused \$5,000 in damage.

A roofer was using a propane torch to complete a roofing job when the fire started.

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