

Ron Chatten

Veteran councillor won't run in fall

CYNTHIA GAMBLE
Staff Writer

Longtime Halton Hills councillor Ron Chatten announced that he would not seek another term in the November municipal elections.

The Ward 4 councillor announced his decision to *The Independent & Free Press* Thursday morning. "To be fair (for future candidates), I felt it was wise to make the decision at this time," Chatten said.

Although suffering from macular eye degeneration, which makes reading difficult, that's not the sole reason for his retirement, he said. His wife Elaine, a victim of a car accident last year, is scheduled to undergo more surgery related to that. Plus, he said, "I think it's just a good time to move on."

Chatten, 68, has served as a local Ward 4 councillor for five terms— 15 years. Before that he spent 35 years as an educator.

However, Chatten is looking forward to life after his council experience ends. Already an active volunteer for many years, he says there are lots of things to do here. Chatten is also the father of three and grandfather of five.

During his tenure on council, Chatten has been renowned as the budget watchdog, striving to keep the tax rate increase as low as possible each year. As well as being a very vocal councillor on behalf of his constituents in the ever-growing Ward 4, Chatten also worked to keep town-wide growth under control.

"I think we've done a good job in keeping the small town atmosphere, although it's getting more difficult with the pressures in the GTA," said

Chatten. "But as long as we're on the well-based system that will happen. If you look at Brampton and Mississauga I think our growth has been more controlled."

He added that by ensuring Town strategies and official plan are in place would give strength to future council decisions to keep the community at a manageable size.

"Through the surveys people say they want to maintain the character, they want the growth but they want it controlled, and I think that will be a horrendous job for future councils and for the people live in the town working together to do that, because the pressure of the GTA is going to be so strong."

Chatten praised the excellence of Town staff in making customer service a number one priority and for helping people in this community.

However, he did note the growth in Ward 4 has been dramatic over the years and the Town will have to take another look at ward boundaries. Chatten continues to be in favour of a part-time council over a smaller full-time one because it will keep the job open for a wider selection of citizens.

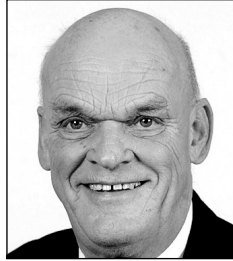
"One of the reasons for doing it (the announcement) now, as I said, Ward 4 is by far the biggest (of the Town wards) and has the majority of the new people coming into the community, and with the possibility of a four-year term, it will give those people who are interested in serving the community time to think about it."

Candidate filing deadline is Sept. 29. The election is on Nov. 13.

(Cynthia Gamble can be reached at cgamble@independentfreepress.com)

'I think it's just a good time to move on.'

—Ward 4 Councillor
Ron Chatten



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