

Town and school board disagree on future of schools in Georgetown

CYNTHIA GAMBLE
Staff Writer

'We're not the bad guys here,' was the message that Wards 3 and 4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal sent out to constituents at last week's council meeting, after receiving numerous complaints about the public school board's decision to delay construction of a Georgetown South school.

Halton District School Board trustees recently voted unanimously not to build a proposed 650-student school on a site east of Mountainview Rd., scheduled to open in 2007. Instead the board will wait until the developer services that land, possibly in 2008 at the earliest.

Their decision was based on the Town of Halton Hills response to the board's draft capital plan the week before—which said the east side site could not be readied in time for construction—although there is a west side site ready to go now.

"There is some misunderstanding of the town's position on this," said Fogal. "We can't instantly service a lot in the middle of what will be a subdivision. There are no roads, no water, no sewer, no lights—nothing is out there. Those are the things the developer puts in and the developer isn't going to put them in until there is approval (by the Ontario Municipal Board) for the houses."

"For people to think the Town isn't cooperating on this is not right," said Fogal, pointing out there was a school site on the east side several years ago, but the board gave up its option on the land and more homes were built instead.

Fogal added that nowhere in the Town report does it say, "don't renovate Georgetown District High School", another complaint that has been leveled by constituents.

In fact, the Town report written by Planning Director Bruce MacLean had plenty to say about the public school board's proposed capital plan—and not a lot of it was agreeable.

Earlier this year, Halton District School Board (HDSB) announced changes to its proposed capital plan that will affect Georgetown students. (The status quo remains for Acton.) They include cancelling the proposed Georgetown South high school (2016) beside the Gellert Community Centre.

Instead HDSB will build an addition on to Georgetown High School (GDHS) in 2007 to serve 150 students. The Gary Allan High School, next to GDHS, will be renovated to be the permanent home of the alternative high school.

The board had hoped to go ahead with its planned JK-Grade 8 elementary school on a Mountainview Rd. East area site in Georgetown South, and will delay its Mountainview Rd. West area site (already serviced and ready for con-

struction) proposed in 2010.

The Town wants the new elementary school to be built on the west side first because that school block has already been serviced by the developer, whereas the east side has not. MacLean stated the Town and developer could not meet the 2007 school opening deadline even if the school board insisted on opening the east side school first. The very earliest would be 2008.

MacLean is also recommending that the school board, Town and developer develop a joint program to enable the future construction of the east side school site after 2007.

'We can't instantly service a lot in the middle of what will be a subdivision...'

*Jane Fogal
Wards 3/4 Regional councillor*



Halton Hills Trustee Ethel Gardiner in an interview Thursday said board staff met last May to press its urgency regarding the east side site. The trustees' decision last week does not mean that building the west side school first is off the books. All options are still being considered, she said. While the east side site is preferable based on equitable distribution of students in Georgetown South, Gardiner said, a decision on whether to

The decision to proceed (with a new school) will be based on community input.

*Ethel Gardiner
Halton Hills school trustee*



proceed with the west side site will be made after community input. Some people are telling her, let's wait a year while others are saying let's build now. Community input will be key at a public meeting later this month, she said.

School trustees will be considering a second version of the draft capital plan at a special meeting of the board tonight (Wednesday).

Second, the Town is concerned by the cancellation of the proposed Georgetown South high school, and the potential negative impact it will have on jointly planned community facilities there. The combination of the Gellert Community Centre and the adjacent Georgetown South high school was intended to serve a community focal point with shared facilities.

At the very least, MacLean is recommending that the HDSB not release its option on the property to the developer. He noted that in discussions with the board, he was told the board does "intend to secure the site for long-term purposes, but there is no commitment to construct an actual facility."

As well, he points out the current GDHS site possesses redevelopment potential.

Third, the Town wants the HDSB to reopen discussion on the Gary Allan High School property. The Town, who has been in discussions with the board about utilizing this property for its own uses or for possible redevelopment, wants to relocate that school elsewhere in the community.

Fourth, MacLean is recommending that the Town and HDSB begin discussions about the integrated planning programs of the two utilizing the Town's current planning horizon of 2021 and the Province's 2031 Places to Grow document.

While HDSB's figures to 2015 are showing lower enrolments, MacLean told councillors that the HDSB's planning timeline could be too short, given the growth that will be sure to come to Georgetown after 2015. The Region and Halton's four municipalities are beginning a planning exercise this year to examine new growth potential through intensification and urban boundary expansions.

HDSB may find itself needing sites in the future, which have been deleted because of the short-term 2015 horizon, MacLean said.

While MacLean cautioned the Town and HDSB have always worked well together in the past "in synching our planning programs", the HDSB's decision-making has been tied up by Ministry of Education edicts and vagueness on funding for new schools.

MacLean is concerned this 'growing disconnect' between the Town's and HDSB's planning decisions could affect the future of Halton Hills community planning, particularly in the placement of parks and shared facilities.

The Halton District School Board is planning to host another round of public information meetings on its proposed capital plan, with the Halton Hills meeting set for Thursday, April 20, 7-9 p.m. at Georgetown District High School—Gardiner urges all concerned residents to attend. A final report will then be presented for approval to school trustees at a meeting in June.

The Town's report can be viewed at www.haltonhills.ca, under council meetings (March 20, report 8G). The school board's capital plan can be viewed on its website, www.hdsb.ca.

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



CAShh is ready... set...

Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills (CAShh) campaign chair Bob Bairstow (left) goes over the contents of the canvassers kits with longtime canvasser Margaret McKane, as well as new canvassing team captain Ken Carson, as they prepare to knock on doors in aid of their campaign. The volunteers have been preparing for the April campaign since last fall, stuffing kits, recruiting canvassers and getting the wheels in motion for the campaign.

Photo by Ted Brown

Earnings exceed \$100,000

Continued from pg. 1

Halton Catholic District School Board

- Luciano Piovesan (Director, Education) - \$160,728
- Richard MacDonald (Superintendent, Education) - \$137,379
- Elaine Hine (Superintendent, Education) - \$137,379
- Giacomo Corbacio (Superintendent, Facilities) - \$137,174
- Larry Clifford (Superintendent, Education) - \$128,034

Six principals earned more than \$100,000.

Halton District School Board

- Barry Finlay (Associate Director) \$159,632
- Ruth Peden (Superintendent) \$129,779
- Dawn Beckett Morton (Executive Officer Human Resources) \$129,048
- Gerry Cullen (Superintendent) \$129,048
- Alan Greyson (Superintendent) \$129,048
- Suzanne Moffatt (Superintendent) \$129,048
- Gary Sadler (Superintendent) \$129,048
- Dane Tutton (Superintendent) \$129,048

A total of 21 principals and one vice-principal made \$100,000 or more.

William Osler Health Centre

- Robert Richards (Chief Executive Officer) \$300,159
- Zahir Moloo (Pathologist) \$262,709
- Brenda Elsbury (Vice President) \$233,443
- Vicki Truman (Vice President) \$233,025
- Ian Marshall (Vice President) \$232,728
- Theodora Ruijs (Pathologist) \$229,909
- Gemma Pastolero (Pathologist) \$229,834


Halton Healthcare Services (which Georgetown Hospital joined in January 2006)

- John Oliver (President/CEO) \$390,743
- Martin Lorne (Medical Staff) \$215,004
- Denise Hardenne (Vice-President) \$190,230
- Allan Halls (Vice-President) \$173,268



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