

Public school board vows to move ahead with Campus

TIM WHITNELL
Special to The IFP

The loss of the Halton Catholic District School Board as a partner for the proposed facility to house four regional organizations will not prevent Halton's public board from signing ahead with the plan.

Acting on a staff recommendation to continue with the concept of a 'super centre' complex for Halton Region, Halton Police and the Halton District School Board, public board trustees gave unanimous approval to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the groups at a board meeting Wednesday.

In doing so trustees gave the OK to an initial outlay of \$70,000 as the board's share of the cost of site pre-design work.

The public board go-ahead came a day after Catholic board trustees voted 4-4 on signing the memorandum. The tie defeated the issue and leaves the separate school board out of the project.

The Halton Regional Campus is a proposed 540,000-square-foot, one-stop cen-

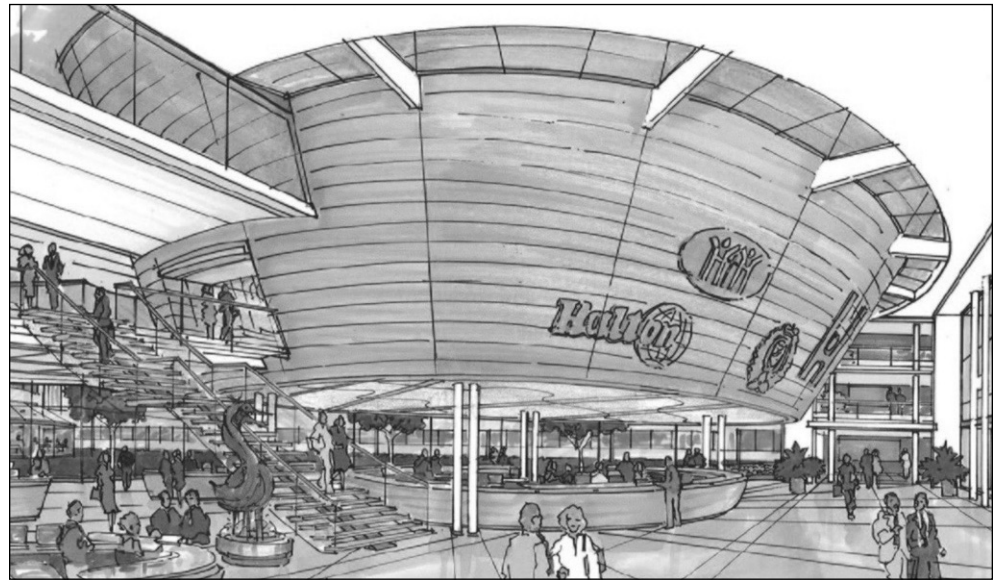
tre that could be open by 2009 on the grounds of the current regional headquarters in Oakville. It would cost about \$127 million to build, saving taxpayers an estimated \$20 million over the cost of the four original partners building their own individual facilities.

The separate board decision left public board administrators and trustees a little confused and disappointed but still convinced they can make the project work, while expressing hope the Catholic board will opt back into the process at some point.

"I'm really surprised because there has been a lot of support of it from the public and through editorials in the newspapers," said HDSB chair Paul Tate.

When asked by another trustee if there was a chance for the Catholic board to slide back into the deal, Tate noted a municipal election is coming in November and possible changes in trustee personnel might prompt that board to re-open the issue.

"Probably the issue comes down to protecting their autonomy and their Catholicism, but that's easy for me to say



An artist's rendering of the proposed Halton Regional Campus lobby.

because I'm not in their shoes," Tate said. HDSB Director of Education Wayne Joudrie said that from his perspective the joint project is too good to pass up.

"The estimated savings for our board is \$5M, as opposed to our own stand-alone facility.

"I don't have all the specifics of the implications of one partner not being involved (but) there is so much of benefit to this that I believe we should go forward to the next level."

Facilities superintendent Gerry Cullen told trustees costs would go up if one of the four partners backs out but he predicted the increase would be marginal.

Joudrie said the board's projected share of costs had been 14 per cent but that it will go up if a partner leaves. He said that by February 2007 trustees would have to make a decision as to whether "we are all in or not". At that time \$750,000 more would be required of the board for more detailed architectural designs.

Growth plan for Halton will see population double by 2031

LISA TALLYN
Staff Writer

The Province says Halton's current population will double by 2031 and figuring out where the new residents will live is one of the key objectives of the Durable Halton Plan.

Halton Region is in the early stages of working on its Durable Halton Plan—a long-term growth strategy that will address requirements of provincial plans such as the Places to Grow and Greenbelt plans and Provincial Policy Statement.

Those plans require that Halton's population grow to 780,000 residents and 390,000 jobs by 2031. The Region and all municipalities already have plans in place to accommodate 615,000 people by 2021, so the new plan will address growth in Halton for an additional 165,000 people.

Area residents had a chance to learn more about the plan and have a say about the direction they would like it to go at a meeting in Georgetown last Tuesday.

About 30 area residents and several local council members, Town and Region staff, were at the meeting at the Cultural Centre.

Similar meetings are being held throughout the region.

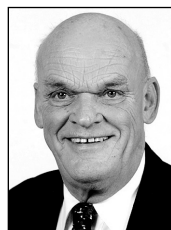
Through the process of formulating the plan, several issues key to Halton's future are to be discussed and examined such as:

- What kind of role agriculture will play in Halton?
- How can Halton improve the health and quality of life of its citizens?
- How can Halton protect its Natural Heritage System?
- What would intensification of Halton's communities look like?
- How and when should communities in Halton expand their urban boundaries?

Bob Lehman, a planning consultant hired by the Region to work on the plan, said the density recommended by the Province for growth centres (there aren't any in Halton Hills) is more than 200 people and jobs per hectare and more than 50 people and jobs per hectare in new areas.

"If we could achieve that, land would last well into the next century," said Lehman.

Region predictions show that, without intensification, the 37,000 acres left for development in Halton would be urbanized in 45 years, with intensification they could last 115 years.



RON CHATTEN

'I don't think it (the name Durable Halton Plan) says anything to anybody. You need to talk to people in language they understand.'

A resident raised concerns about the roads in Halton Hills and how they will be impacted by growth.

Director of planning and transportation for Halton Region Jane Clohcy said transportation and water will be addressed through the plan.

Halton Hills Ward 2 Councillor Bryan Lewis asked if the population target set by the province could be appealed, and wondered if there wasn't enough well water available in Halton Hills to service the number of people it has to accommodate, would that mean the town would have to accept piped Lake Ontario water.

Lehman said the provincial population

target could not be appealed.

"How it changes Halton Hills we don't know at this time," said Clohcy.

Another area resident said he was amazed by the lack of interest by residents in the Durable Halton Planning process.

"I don't think it (the name Durable Halton Plan) says anything to anybody. You need to talk to people in language they understand," said Councillor Ron Chatten.

"You've got to engage them locally and they've got to believe if they come out it will make a difference," said Chatten.

Mayor Rick Bonnette stressed the need to include in the plan commercial and industrial growth in Georgetown.

Lehman said over the summer and fall the region and consultants working on the Durable Halton Plan will work on background papers and studies and come back to the public for input on some options for where the growth might be.

For more information on the plan visit www.halton.ca/DurableHalton. Anyone with questions should contact Gena Ali, Halton's Senior Planner Growth Management at 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866).

(Lisa Tallyn can be reached at ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)

Think prompt service

Think Garaga Experts

GARAGA EXPERTS

When a door needs service, you need help on the spot. For emergency service, call the Garaga Experts team.

Mark Brousseau

B & M Garage Door
118 Guelph Street, Unit 6
Georgetown
www.bmgaragedoor.com
(905) 873-4848

B & M
Garage Door