

Growing pains

'We're damned if we do and damned if we don't,' says mayor

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Town staff has prepared a Discussion Paper for Halton Hills council to use to formulate its position for Halton Region. That paper calls for moderate growth on alternative water/wastewater servicing. (See story page 5.)

Pointing to the Hemson report, calling it inconclusive, a frustrated Mayor Rick Bonnette said, "We're basically damned if we do, and damned if don't."

"Council is going to have a tough road to go ahead. It's very interesting to see the audience tonight that

came out. It was all various opinions. And judging by the e-mails it's all whether to grow, at least grow but don't bring The Pipe in, don't grow at all and even one comment that says that 'raise taxes so we don't grow'.

"We have various differences of opinion but hopefully over the next



RICK BONNETTE

few weeks it will be more crystalized."

Council made no decision at Monday's meeting but will attend a special workshop on Saturday to formulate a response to Halton Region. Council members will take these ideas, plus the many more e-mails, letters and phone calls, into consideration.

At the October 29 council meeting, town staff will present a report, which formulates the recommendations the Town will present to Halton Region.

The reports are posted on the Town's website, www.haltonhills.ca

Residents' views vary on growth

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

Nine residents stood at the podium in the Halton Hills council chambers to give their opinion on how this town should grow— or not— over the next 24 years.

Ron Heller, of Acton East Housing Corporation, said Acton's logical growth to the east towards Georgetown was stopped in its tracks by the Province's Greenbelt legislation. Acton is, in essence, landlocked by the legislation, with its only alternative to develop the Maple Leaf lands— contaminated brownfields by the former tannery.

"Approximately 50 per cent of the undeveloped area within the current boundary is former tannery property containing a high percentage of wetland and environmentally sensitive land, which would be better suited for the Greenbelt than other areas adjoining the current urban boundary."

Heller wants Town and Region backing to amend the Greenbelt to allow a mix of housing and recreational and commercial for seniors on Hwy. 7, east of Tanners Dr. It would be modeled after the "Village by the Arboretum" in Guelph.

Former Acton councillor Norm Elliott supported Heller's bid and also suggested that Town should look into the former well area south of Acton, that used to service that community as a future water supply.

Brendan Smith called for water conservation by both residents and the aggregate industry; use mix-use planning models like live/work (apartments over commercial); forbid development of Class 1 & 2 farmland and set up incentives for farmers; selection of green-friendly industry and vertical intensification (build up, not out). "With certain guidelines like six-storey limits and street-level façade conservation, each town's unique

'There has to be a better co-operation among all levels of government or this community will be destroyed.'



MARILYN SERJEANTSON

architectural character is more sustainable with intensification than if we continue to build vast brick shantytowns on our farmlands."

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- *Discussion paper, pg. 5*

Barbara Halsall said the Town should also consider water resulting from conservation measures, rather than just total reliance on groundwater or the Big Pipe. She also pointed to pollution in the Great Lakes and lowering levels.

She also suggested a new financial program that would allow farmers to stay on the land.

Marilyn Serjeantson, former mayor of Halton Hills, is concerned about a possible dramatic population increase and its impact on the infrastructure, pointing to clogged roads in need of repair and stretched library services. Development charges are not paying the way.

"If we get The Pipe, the same thing (growth in Milton) will happen here. ...There has to be a better co-operation among all levels of government or this community will be destroyed. It's hard to fight or stall growth and stay a smallish town in the GTA but there has to be fairness in how a community is impacted."

Mike Davis, former Georgetown

councillor, stated there should be no growth at all and all of Halton Hills lands should be placed within the Greenbelt so that none of the lands can be developed.

"It's been well established that development doesn't pay for development and the cost to maintain (roads, parks etc) single family homes are very high— and the burden on taxpayers is forever."

Don Rowntree is a third generation farmer on Ninth Line, south of 10 Sideroad, posed the most interesting question of the night.

"Yes, it's nice to talk about saving the farmland but saving the farmland for who?"

He said the approaching south Georgetown development is forcing his neighbours— dairy farmers— to leave Halton Hills due to the provincial government's new Walkerton water setback regulations. He, himself, has chronic water shortage, and its not enough to sustain his cattle. Switching to crops would do little to ease the water situation, and due to the current prices, would not be profitable either.

"In the case of my neighbours' cows being pushed, it's not the farmer that wants to leave, it's the areas developing around it that has caused all the problem."

Lucy Stocco, representing the South Georgetown Landowners Group which own land from Five to 10 Sideroads between Trafalgar Rd. and Ninth Line, said the lands represent a logical extension to the Georgetown boundary and are of sufficient size to accommodate a broad mix of development to allow for a "complete community". She said there is a positive aspect to growth, and the Town and Region are not taking as much advantage of the 401 Corridor as they should be.

Leslie Adams said number one on her wish list is no more negative social, economic or environmental impact.



Alien invasion?

Not exactly. Halton Hills firefighters donned Hazmat suits to respond to a call on Five Sideroad west of Trafalgar Rd. Monday afternoon. Halton Police had called firefighters because a 45-gallon drum marked "toxic" and "hazardous" had rolled off a truck and into the ditch. When firefighters arrived they determined the barrel had not been punctured and the product inside— Ninol 30 LL, also known as lauric acid, a saturated fatty acid occurring in many vegetable fats, particularly in coconut and palm kernel oils— had not leaked. Public Works staff responded, and removed the barrel.

Photo by Graham Paine

Police blotter

Vandals cause \$1,200 damage to area school

Approximately \$1,200 damage was caused at Georgetown Christian School on Trafalgar Rd. sometime late Friday or early Saturday.

Damaged was a sign and overhead light in the school's front alcove, as well as a classroom window.

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Halton Regional Police were the target of graffiti spray-painted on a wall at George Kennedy School on Weber Dr. sometime Saturday or Sunday. The cost for clean up is about \$100.

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Racist comments were written in black marker on the recycling bins at Joseph Gibbons School on Moore Park Cr. Clean-up is estimated to cost \$100.

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A set of speakers was stolen sometime late Thursday or early Friday from a vehicle for sale at a Trafalgar Rd. home. The speakers are valued at \$350.

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A wallet containing cash, identification and credit cards, was taken from a vehicle parked at The Beer Store on Guelph St. Sunday afternoon. A window had been left down in the car.

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11/2007
fall in love
hot tub inventory reduction event

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Georgetown
905.873.8835

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