

# More still to be done to aid Town disabled

By FRANCES NIBLOCK  
The New Tanner

While the Town has come a long way in identifying, removing and preventing barriers that hurt or detract from the quality of life of disabled persons, there is "more to be done" according to Councillor Moya Johnson.

As chair of the Halton Hills Accessibility Advisory Committee, Johnson recently presented Council with the annual municipal accessibility plan, an update on what has been done and what must be done – it is a provincially mandated program – to improve

the quality of life for the disabled. As well, many seniors face the same issues that disabled people do including problems with transportation, access to buildings and loss of hearing or sight.

Johnson said an audit of Town buildings and facilities showed they are not accessible to all, as they thought, and while some items will be big budget items to fix, some can be a lot more accessible with "very slight adjustments."

Johnson said the first of 11 action items in the committee report is to complete an audit of Town facilities to develop a five-year plan

to identify barriers, get cost estimates for retrofitting and list all barrier-free facilities and programs.

The 2006 accessibility plan comes with an \$80,000 price tag – \$50,000 in the proposed capital budget and \$30,000 in the operating budget.

One of the major costs is \$45,000 to look at improving sidewalk safety, and

Johnson said a sub-committee would be formed to identify those sidewalk and intersection locations that are hazardous to disabled persons, and also to ask other disabled persons to identify problem spots.

"The committee is also looking at supporting pilot projects such as traffic signal retrofits designed to assist seniors and disabled

persons with audio components... and timers that will tell how much time they have left before the traffic light will change..." Johnson said.

One of the major changes the Town is proud of is its decision to voluntarily provide closed-captioning of its Council meetings, beginning in March, at a cost of \$16,000.

Other items in the 2006 municipal accessibility plan include:

- more staff training on accessibility issues
- accessibility training opportunities for local businesses to meet licensing requirements

•a special event in honour of National Access Awareness Week

•an annual award ceremony and community open house to recognize accessibility achievements

•Awards of Merit for making accessibility improvements to local businesses

Johnson said the work of the committee would help them achieve a "better Halton Hills, that's more accessible to all."

Acton Councillor Jon Hurst said he was glad to see that there were some workshops and training planned for small businesses.

## Collision at Mill/Main

No details were available at press time regarding an alleged hit and run collision between two vehicles at the corner of Mill and Main Sts. Tuesday evening about 7:15p.m.

Police and firefighters blocked off Mill St. from Willow to Main Sts. and part of Main as police investigated. One disabled vehicle was in the middle of the intersection.



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Rural students of Nassagaweya and Esquesing rode the first school bus owned by Tyler Transport. Ted Tyler believes the photo was taken around 1948. Left to right, Marjory Warne, Jean Armstrong, Beatrice Cripps, Kathleen Foster, Mildred Armstrong, unidentified, B'Anne McLaughlin, Mabel Thomas, Lorraine Mullin, Eleada Britton, Shirley Thompson, Annie Leitch, Ralph Denny, Dave Steddon and Lennie Zions.

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