

# EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

## Off the map – again!

Well, it is no surprise but Acton has been wiped off the map again – this time in Halton Region's Durable Plan, a blueprint for the Region's look and function in the future.

Every other major urban centre in Halton is on the map, including Burlington, Oakville, Milton and Georgetown (Halton Hills) while this community of 12,000 was totally swallowed up by greenspace. The map was developed in conjunction with the Province's Places to Grow legislation, Greenbelt Plan and municipal Official Plans, which partly explains the puzzle.

The obvious conclusion is that new growth from the anticipated 780,000 people who will move to Halton by 2031 will all be housed in the aforementioned municipalities. Meanwhile, Acton will be stifled by not only the Niagara Escarpment Act but the Greenbelt to boot, with no breathing room.

The last time Acton was left off the map was in the 1970s when the Province erased it from the Ministry of Transportation's official road map. An oversight, the Ministry said. An insult people here declared. It appeared on the next map in type similar in size to Ospringe. Someone down there didn't like us.

Probably, since Acton is part of Halton Hills, there's little recognition it exists in some quarters. The fact it is hemmed in by greenspace and lapping up water the folks down the Escarpment want, cartographers probably thought it wasn't worth the bother to include urban Acton on the map.

Well, as some folks say when they give you lemons you make lemonade. Councillors Fogal and Somerville are advocates of people in Halton Hills deciding what they want in the future, instead of relying solely on the Region. Somerville suggests the Town should hold its own public information meeting, a suggestion we heartily endorse.

Somerville said Halton can't only focus on areas of the map "where the vultures are already circulating." He says Halton must have plans for areas like Acton which can't expand its urban boundaries but needs intensification. We might add that some of the best farm land in Ontario lies in areas slated for growth.

Too many planners have tunnel vision. They need to expand their horizons to include the smaller places in Halton which are overlooked in the bigger scheme of things. Some of the best people in Ontario live in them.

## DC out of line

Councillors have good reason to be concerned about the huge increase in development charges (DC) proposed by Halton's two school boards – public and Catholic. So should the home-buying public.

The public board proposal to increase its residential (DC) by 33.9 per cent and non-residential by 34.6 per cent and the Catholic board's proposed 22.6 per cent increase for residential and 27.7 for non-residential can make a substantial difference in the price of new housing which is already beyond the means of many people, especially families.

It is especially punitive for housing in Acton, developer Fred Dawkins explains, where the charges are the same as other parts of Halton where land is much more valuable. He says most people don't realize that development charges are approximately \$20,000 on a new home – up-front money for roads, sewers, street lights, parks, police and fire services – before a shovel goes into the ground.

Dawkins, who paid \$6 million in development charges to develop the 420 home Devon Place subdivision in Acton's east end, says Halton's DCs are among the highest in the province. Recent increases would have boosted development charges in Devon Place by another \$2 million.

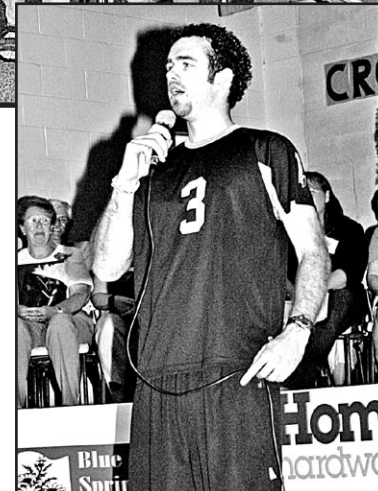
The increase alone, if this writer's math is correct, would have added another \$4,760 to the cost of a home in Devon Place.

Councillor Mike O'Leary rightly notes that although the Town, Region and school boards set development charges independently, ultimately the Town takes the blame. And home owners pay the charges.

Obviously the school boards are being stretched by the cost of new facilities but it is absurd to think the extra costs can keep being added on to housing. Obviously the province should be kicking in more funds to education.



**GREAT GUARDS:** Students at McKenzie-Smith Bennett School honoured the Town's crossing guards at the third annual Appreciation Day on June 6. Ace athlete Jeff Birrell, an alumnus of the school was the guest speaker. Crossing guards honoured included: Gordon Bassett, Jennifer Boyle, Sandra Buxton, Margaret Clark, Anna Connolly, Diane Cooper, Isabel Cripps, David Degrace, Mike Dockeray, Irene Doriat, John Fitzgibbon, Melanie Fox, Charlie Glen, Alice Hickery, Kay Jones, Mary-Ellen Keane, Otto Kirchmayr, Peter Kotsifas, Angie Lamoureux, Veronica Lampkin, Amy Lusty, Ken MacDonald, Shirley MacDonald, George Magee, Tom Massena, Marion McCann, Gord Morton, Steven Norman, Ross Norton, James Rowsell, Velma Somerton, Doug Tucker, Robert Tufford, Lois Webb and William Webb. – Photos by Peter Atkinson



## That first bike

# My choice – Donny Osmond purple

When I finished my grade three year, I was lucky enough to get an incredible present along with a great end of the school year memory.

Maybe it was my report card. Or maybe it was the fact that I was avoiding riding my old, gold coloured bicycle I got when I was five because it was no longer challenging, and I started using my sister's adult bicycle.

The only way I could touch the ground was to lean the bicycle to one side. I didn't always successfully stop because my feet didn't reach the pedals too well. I could see my mother cringe as I tried to ride it and my dad would scold me when I used my sister's bicycle because it was too big for me.

Either way, at the end of the school year, I was taken on a trip to Kinal's hardware store. It was time for a more size appropriate bicycle and for me to stop riding



By  
Angela Tyler

Tracey's.

We made our way to the bicycle display hanging from the ceiling just past the cashier. I was drawn to the bicycle I wanted. There are only a few things I remember about that day. I remember the car ride to Kinal's. I remember my grandpa being there, which in retrospect I'm not really sure if it was him, my dad or my grandma or a combination of all of them. I also remember seeing the bicycle for the first time. I had to have it.

Who was with me had to ask the question "Are you sure you want that one?" It was the coolest. My choice was Donny Osmond purple. I don't even think I had

seen a purple bicycle before that day. It was a three-speed with a banana seat and hand brakes. It was beyond cool.

Day after day, I would cycle around town with my friends on my Donny Osmond too cool purple bicycle. Unlike today, we rode without helmets. I had a few tumbles with it and have the scars to prove it like the one from the gouge out of my elbow, the cut I had down my calf, or the scar on my finger from when I stuck my finger in the chain trying to re-attach it. Sometimes I can't help but think even though helmets are a good idea, it kind of takes the fun out of getting "war wounds," the rights of passage as a child.

The bicycle is long gone. I don't even think I have a picture of it now. I do have a picture of the gold bicycle. My dad and I love that picture. As for the purple

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