

EDITORIAL

with Hartley Coles

Window of opportunity

If we're beginning to sound like a broken record with pleas to the powers-that-be regarding the continuing need in Acton for room to grow, it's because there's presently an Official Plan Review for the Town of Halton Hills on the table at Town Council.

When the Province arbitrarily imposed greenbelt legislation on the present boundaries of Acton, it seemed some members of Halton Hills Council washed their hands of attempts to broaden borders so this town could enjoy the amenities most other communities have. It was accepted as a foregone conclusion that nothing could be done until a 10 year moratorium on any change had passed.

However, it seems another window has opened. Greenbelt legislation is being reviewed in the next 18 months and the Province will listen to pleas to "round out" places like Acton if it is supported by local and regional councils responses and does not violate the intent of greenbelt legislation.

It's an opportunity for Halton Hills Council to request that Acton expand at least to the Fourth Line where a small community – Bannockburn – already exists. It's actually only a matter of a few metres and benefits would be incalculable.

For about two decades from 1982 to 2002 development in Acton was at a standstill. Basic services and amenities, once enjoyed, dried up or diminished. Development in the last four years has been positive, exceeding all projections and encouraging both social and business improvements. We don't want to go back into that paralysis of constraint. Some elbow room would "round out" the community.

The year 2004 was one of the most productive in Acton's history. Construction of new homes and businesses reached their zenith after years of speculation and changed the face of the town, revitalizing commerce and creating a new business climate. That continued to grow over 2005 especially in the east end where a new TD Bank has been built and opened.

The new parking lot that extends from Willow St. to Main St. N. was paved and has been a boon for the downtown which has gone through a metamorphosis of sort. Although there are still empty stores, business continues to locate there. Some stores have relocated to more advantageous locations.

Two decades ago a town planner suggested Acton's growth would be best served by having two commercial anchor areas – one in the east end, the other in the downtown. Others would fill between. The concept remains the same.

The question now is where does the community go from here. Dalton McGuinty's Liberals stunted Acton's growth by the imposition of the greenbelt which follows the town's present boundaries. Council should try to get us some wiggle room.

Few of us would like to see the virtually unchecked growth Halton Hills is experiencing in Georgetown, or the meteoric multiplication in Milton, but land east of the Acton arena is prime land for modest growth and could easily be part of the urban area.

If smaller communities are to be self-sustaining they must have some room. Under the present greenbelt guidelines they are denied it. The result is they hover in some kind of neverland – neither vigorous or feeble – and must travel elsewhere for services not available in their hometown adding to the gridlock on highways.



HAPPY HIKERS: 13 hikers from the Acton Seniors Recreation Centre enjoyed a trip through the Limehouse Conservation Area last week and tried out the new bridge that spans the Black Creek on its way down the Escarpment. The Happy Hikers leave the Seniors' Centre Friday at 10a.m. for forays into interesting countryside of this area. - Eileen Dix photo

Fall Fair more than midway

With the fast approaching Fall Fair, many can hardly wait for the rides, the fun and games. It's sometimes hard to remember that our Fall Fair is so much more than just rides and games.

When you're of school age two things about the Fair are important. They are the rides and seeing your school work on display and maybe getting a ribbon for it. For me, the Fair was and is about anything but the rides.

It all started back maybe 20 years ago at the Plowing Match. My family and I were there and my sister had a wonderful idea: she, my mom and I should go on the ride called the Zipper. Boy we sure weren't thinking well that day. It was dreadful. Our bodies were flung around. Our heads bashed against the metal cage and I'm sure that is what whiplash feels like. I just can't explain how awful it was.

Years later, with the memory of the Zipper fading, and at the Fair with Peel Street friends Pam and David, they suggested we should all go on the Tilt-a-Whirl.



By
Angela Tyler

It seemed harmless.

I screamed. I held on for dear life for a few good spins of the whirling cart, I had succumb to the inevitable. I had barfed all over Pam's brother David. It was then I knew that Fall Fair rides and I do not mix.

It was somewhere around that time that I learned to appreciate Fall Fairs and amusement parks for the many more things they had to offer. I already appreciate our great Fair, yet sometimes one needs to get out of routine and explore. Each year I try to do that at the fair.

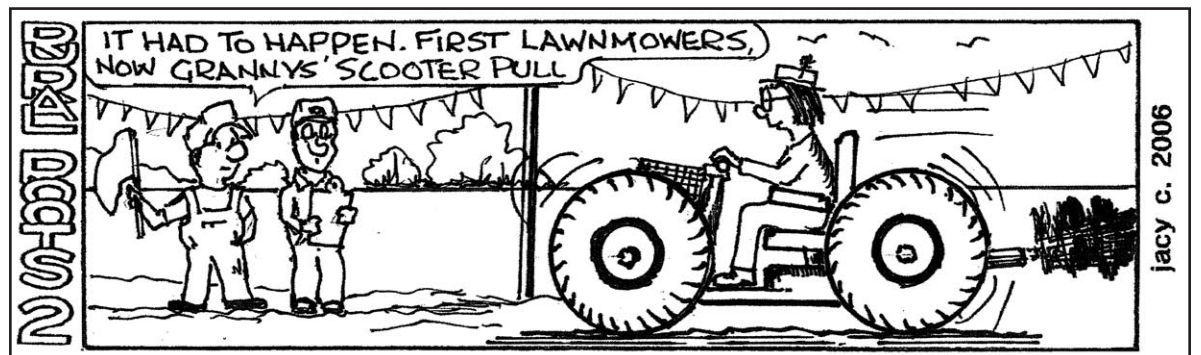
A few years ago, I went to the truck pulls for the entire evening with the Dude and some friends. It's kind of fun but I couldn't understand the lingo. By the end of the evening the only most important thing I knew about the

truck pulls was although may be a nice fall evening weatherwise it is always cold at the pulls beside Fairy Lake. In the years to follow, I knew I needed to find things that didn't require wearing a winter coat in September.

Luckily for me, while taking pictures of the Fair for the paper, I've reacquainted myself with it. I kind of like seeing the cows up front while their being judged and shown. I like seeing how people enjoy the horseshoe tournaments and get the biggest kick out of watching young equestrians strive to win.

All weekend you can have all sorts of foods and usually some of the best french fries to be found. You can have fun with the amusements or you can appreciate the many items people have made in the home crafts division.

There are so many great things about our Fair. It's hard to believe there are people from town who haven't attended it. I can't understand why anyone wouldn't want to visit the Fair.



THE NEW TANNER
PUBLISHING LTD.

373 Queen Street East, Unit 1
Acton, Ontario L7J 2N2
email: thenewtanner@on.aibn.com

(519) 853-0051 Fax: (519) 853-0052

Publisher

Ted Tyler

Editorial

Hartley Coles

Editorial Contributors

Frances Niblock Mike O'Leary Angela Tyler
Janis Fread Rebecca Ring

Advertising and Circulation

Marie Shadbolt Bruce Cargill

Composing

Danielle Mclsaac Janine Taylor

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