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Civic Committee Report

Wheels set in motion to implement recommendations

By JANE MULLER
Champion Reporter

The wheels have been set in motion to begin the process of implementing most of the 22 recommendations contained in the Civic Committee Report—which aims to improve various aspects of the entire town.

The \$15,000 report, produced by the partnership of Barry Lyon and Peter Turner, was completed last spring with little action taken on its suggested improvement—until a meeting Wednesday evening at Town Hall. Among those in attendance were representatives from Town council, the Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA), Milton Chamber of Commerce and Milton Historical Society.

Each group proposed to make an effort to act on those specific recommendations which are directed toward them, including the town which—if the budget allows—will be taking responsibility for nearly half of the recommendations.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of the recommendations has been left in the air until a second meeting is planned. A co-ordinating body or steering committee which will oversee the implementation of the report's recommendations has not yet been established.

It was decided representation from each of the groups implicated in the recommendations on an overseeing body is essential and more time is needed for interested parties to come forward.

Once that group is established, members will ensure the wheels stay in motion, providing momentum geared to completing the projects recommended.

A suggestion to undo a portion of the Main St. beautification project conducted by the DBIA is going to be pursued by the Town if the budget allows for it. The report recommends Main St., at the end of Martin St. be returned to its original state and the east west through lane be restored to alleviate traf-

fic congestion problems which now plague the intersection.

The redevelopment of the municipal property block, including Town Hall and the old post office, is another priority of the report being "actively pursued" by the Town. Mayor Gord Krantz, who chaired the meeting Wednesday, said council was to receive an update of the status of the redevelopment proposals at the next council meeting.

The town plans to sell or lease the nearly two acre property in order to generate funds to facilitate a move of municipal offices and council chambers to the old court house and jail complex. The old building on Brown St. will require extensive rebuilding—somewhere in excess of \$2 million.

Another area of great importance contained in the Civic Committee report was a recommendation to change the Town's sign bylaws.

"The bylaws are being reviewed by a sign committee which has been appointed," the mayor said.

The Lyon and Turner report suggested existing sign bylaws tend "to restrict individuality and to discourage signage emphasizing the street's historic character."

The maintenance of sidewalks and parking areas downtown is described in the report as "simply inadequate." Steps have already been taken to improve the situation.

The DBIA hired a summer student last year to maintain planter boxes and trees with plans for the same next year. To make the job of maintaining the street easier a "billy goat" or sidewalk vacuum has to be purchased by the town. Maplehurst Correctional Centre inmates have recently begun to shovel Main St. sidewalks in the downtown core—other than those areas which merchants are responsible for.

Town staff is also addressing the problem of a lack of core area housing, another deficiency noted in the Civic Report.

In an effort to obtain a better mix of retail stores on Main St., Town staff have been promoting the idea of specialty shops downtown, a move which has already met with success. Director of planning Bob Zsadyani told those at the meeting, "we're going to have to pursue this one on a continuing basis."

One recommendation the Town is not actively pursuing at this time is the imposition of development review and architectural control, which would take into consideration the visual impact of new development and help maintain the town's historic quality.

Milton Chamber of Commerce will also have a hand in some of the projects suggested in the report and the group has already begun to proceed. The chamber is already looking at new and more attractive service club signs at town entrances.

Mr. Zsadyani said he would co-ordinate the efforts of the Chamber and Milton's Horticultural Society, which has offered to arrange decorative plantings at the entrance points.

The CN overpass on Highway 25 has not been painted since 1963 and, although the bridge warrants a paint job, Mr. Zsadyani said CN is not prepared to cover the cost—amounting to about \$17,000. He said CN is prepared to do the actual work, however.

Another Chamber of Commerce responsibility is the Farmers' Market, which, according to recommendations, should be moved from its present location behind the old court house and jail complex to the Main St. shopping area. The DBIA will be working with the Chamber to try to move the market to Main St.

Improving retail merchandising techniques in the downtown has already begun in the form of seminars sponsored by both the Chamber and DBIA.

"You read the recommendation and it's hard to say there is anything wrong with it," said DBIA chairman Barney Henderson, "but it's hard to get the response."

He said his organization would continue to present seminars to help improve merchandising despite the difficulty of soliciting participation.

An annual assessment of community attitudes toward the town in general and its business community is recommended in the report. Milton Jaycees have taken this project under their wing with the first community attitude survey completed late last year.

Mayor Krantz has established a committee which will be making plans for the town's 125th anniversary celebrations and projects, as suggested in a report. A project cited for implementation this year is the improvement of the Mill Pond and Livingston Park. As the report states, this is an area "community attention should be lavished upon."

Another recommendation, being considered by Milton Historical Society as an anniversary project, is the establishment of an historic walk to highlight interesting and historic buildings in the town's core. The report suggests a detailed map of the route and buildings be identified with plaques.

Committee changes

Committee chairman in Halton's education structure will now be elected by their peers, trustees decided last week.

Acting on a recommendation from Milton trustee Ivan Armstrong, trustees approved a change to the board's bylaw which allowed the annual striking committee to name the chairman of the board's advisory committees.

In his motion, Mr. Armstrong said allowing the committee members to choose their own chairman would make the committees function better because the members would be working with people they support.

Burlington trustee Bill Priestner said he supported the "democratic intent" of the motion, but wondered how chairmen could be found for especially difficult committees, such as salary negotiations.

Halton Regional Police have laid no charges.

Teenager hurt

A 16-year-old Milton youth is recovering in Milton District Hospital after being struck by a car Monday night.

Randy McKinnon was walking northbound on Martin St. near Steeles Ave. at approximately 8.30 p.m. when he was struck by a car.

Driver David Parkinson of Elmwood Cres. Milton said he did not see the teenager on the road until he hit him.

McKinnon received cuts and bruises.

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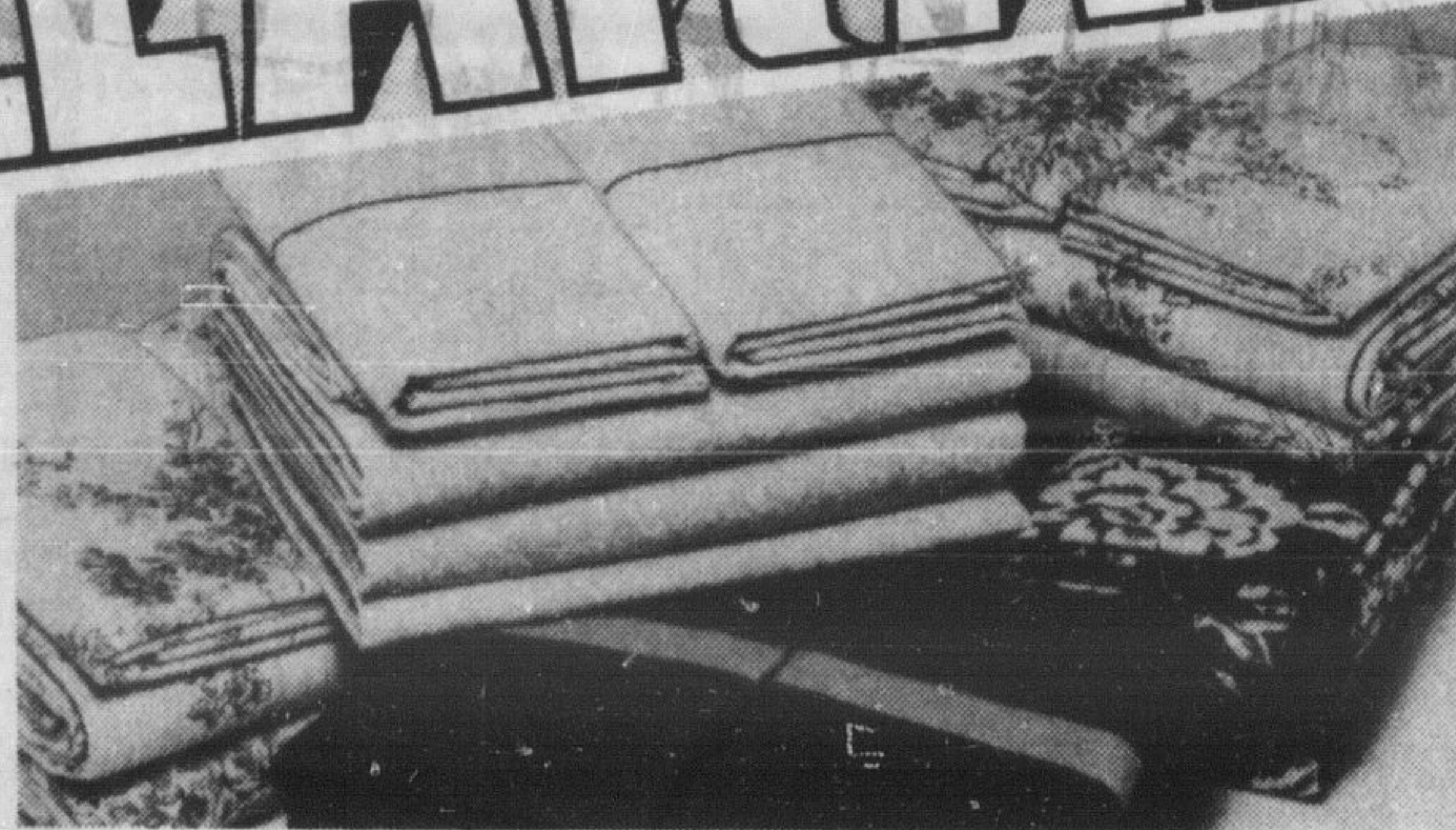
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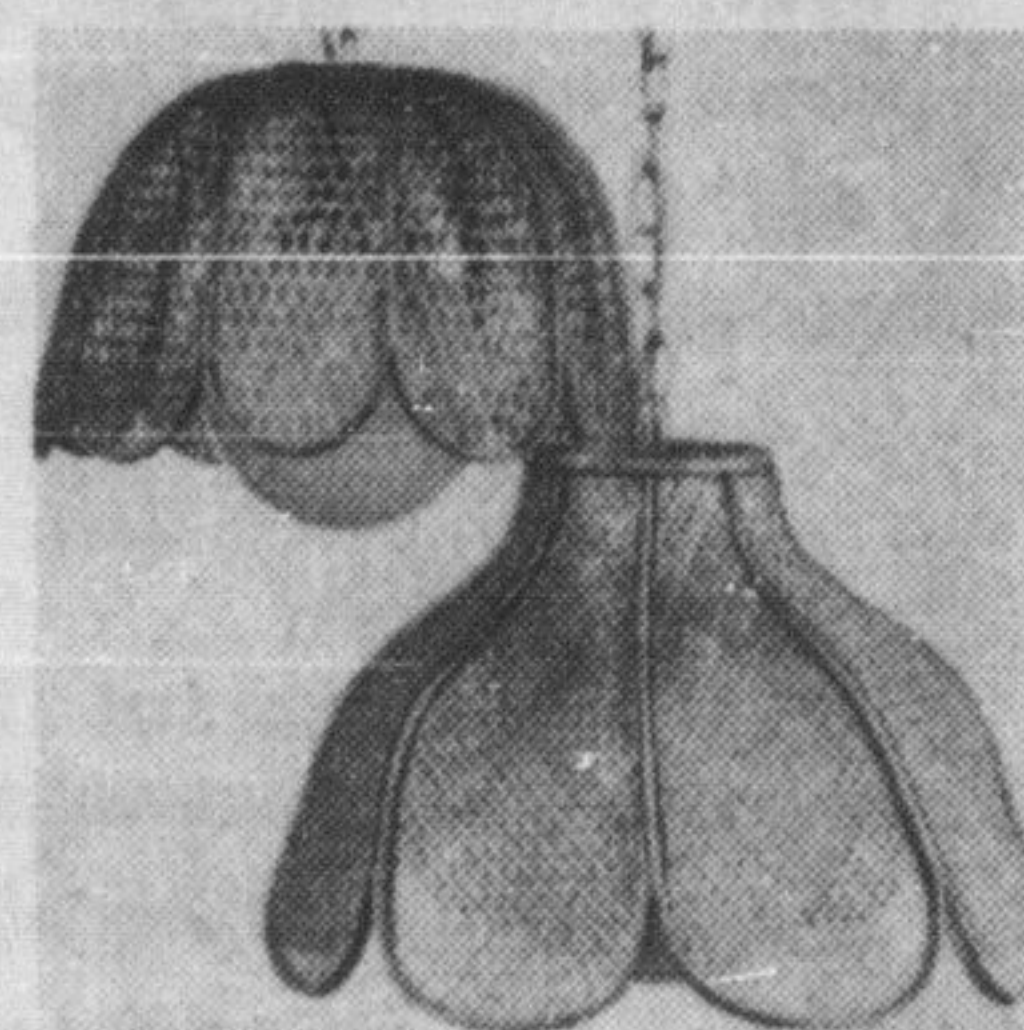
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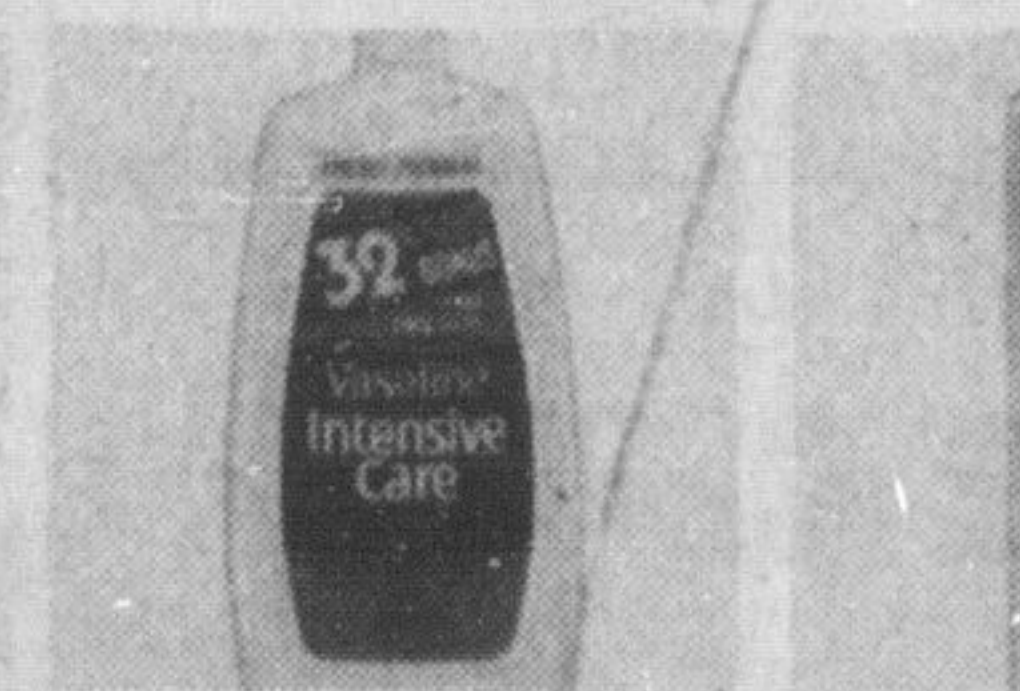


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