

Selling Milton to industry best left to Milton: council



Milton Mayor Gord Krantz, along with other town councillors, thinks the town may not be getting everything it deserves from Halton's business development activities and supports a change in the current law.

By LINDA KIRBY
Staff Writer

Milton will have a chance to promote its industrial strengths on its own, if the province proceeds with proposed amendments to the Halton Act.

Responsibility for both promotion and industrial development rests solely with the region now, but the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has recently introduced a proposal to allow for greater involvement from the local government.

The plan permits two different options—one, to delegate the responsibility to the region and the municipalities or to allow the region to delegate the responsibility to the area municipalities.

"I don't want to give up the opportunity of doing it ourselves," said councillor Rose Harrison, adding Milton should not be "lumped in with the rest of the municipalities."

"We have something here that is unique... and I don't think we are getting much out of the regional pro-

motion department," she said.

Town administrator Roy Main said he was concerned about outright delegation of promotional programs to the town.

He noted Burlington is the only municipality in the region which has an industrial promotional department, while other municipalities have neither the staff nor the expertise to assume the responsibility.

In a report to council, deputy clerk Bill Roberts stated the region's overall advertising and promotional budget of approximately \$90,000 would be more effective than what could be accomplished by each municipality on its own.

Over the past two years, the town has contributed \$10,000 in each year to regional promotional efforts along with other municipalities.

Councillors agreed they would be satisfied with a delegation of authority for industrial and business promotion to the region by the proposed amendment, as long as Milton has the opportunity to carry out some promotions on its own.

Region supports plan to attract business

By STEVE ARNOLD
News Editor

Milton may not be getting everything it deserves from Halton's efforts to attract new businesses here.

That's why Mayor Gord Krantz and the town's other members supported a regional council decision to ask the province to allow local government to take a more active role in business development.

Under the current law, only Halton Region can actively work to attract new industries to the area, although local agencies can work only so long as they have municipally owned land to market.

Currently, only Burlington is in that position.

The council decision followed action of the administration and finance committee, where Burlington Mayor Roly Bird was a strong advocate of the change.

"In my experience the businesses who are coming in want to deal with the local municipality," he said. "They want to be made welcome there."

He added, however, the upper tier of local government also has a role to play, especially in co-ordinating

co-operative advertising ventures and other projects.

In an interview after the meeting, Mayor Gord Krantz admitted "I have some mixed reactions to this whole thing."

"I have a tendency to lean toward the municipality getting involved in this because I think we can do it better," he said. "I'm just a little skeptical about what can be done at the regional level."

Mr. Krantz said he was afraid if the region was left totally in charge of attracting new industry to the area, the heaviest emphasis in that sales pitch would be directed toward Burlington and Oakville, "and Milton and Halton Hills would get a little bit of tokenism and that would be about it."

Under the current arrangement, he said, only those firms which specifically ask about possibilities in Milton are directed this way.

"When general inquiries are being made I suspect they're being oriented to the southern two municipalities first and there has to be a better way of doing it than we are now," he said.

Milton Chamber of Commerce president Don Knight, however, said



Burlington has the advantages which attract industry and should be allowed to do its own promotion, according to Mayor Roly Bird.

the group has not taken a formal position on this question, but added "anything which will increase the town's participation has to be a plus."

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