

# Committee agrees to give man his money back

By BRAD REAUME

The Champion

It may pay to be persistent. Rural resident Claire Sweetman has cleared the first hurdle in his quest to get almost \$1,100 from Town Hall. Having secured agreement from the Community Services Committee he need only get ratification from full council in a meeting scheduled for next Tuesday (May 19). Battling municipal government for several years, Mr. Sweetman eventually won the right to sever a lot from his farm so he could build a retirement home. On Monday night committee granted him reimbursement of some of his costs, despite a Town policy which dictates that developers pay. There were numerous requirements attached to Mr. Sweetman's property development, including a study to insure that traffic views were adequate for a proposed driveway.

Eventually the proposal went before the Ontario Municipal Board, which granted the severance but ordered Mr. Sweetman to pay all the costs related to removing a knoll on the road which impedes traffic views.

Mr. Sweetman found a new location for the driveway but the Town insisted on a traffic study. Mr. Sweetman told committee members the Town should pay for the services of the traffic engineer, because they insisted on the study.

"I cannot understand. Why did Milton oppose our proposal in front of the Ontario Municipal Board? The Town could not win. We were doing you a favour by converting an old dump into a revenue producing piece of property," Mr. Sweetman said.

Mr. Sweetman said he wrote the Town "a nasty letter" after receiving much "abuse" over the matter. He told councillors that

their conduct on his request for reimbursement would indicate how the aged are treated, and whether the Town is run by elected people or a bunch of out-of-control bureaucrats.

Committee chair Barry Lee commended Mr. Sweetman on his perseverance and on his success in obtaining the lot severance. He told Mr. Sweetman his letters were not nasty but "the most interesting I've received from any constituent."

Councillor Rick Day said he supported the Town reimbursing Mr. Sweetman for the traffic study because his family transaction was being dealt with under rules aimed at large-scale developers.

Councillor Cindy Lunau said she understood the extenuating circumstances but was concerned that the decision might set a precedent. Her sentiments were echoed by other councillors, thus setting up a potential debate when it comes before full council.

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