

Halton Region readies its archeological plan

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

Halton is full of history, much of it as yet uncovered.

There are currently about 600 known archaeological sites in Halton representing the 11,000 years of human habitation of this area. Many of these sites were short-term prehistoric camps used when natives moved through the area on a seasonal basis.

By 500 AD larger and more permanent settlements became established as agriculture became a way of life.

With large-scale development comes the need to determine where archaeological sites may be and to protect ones that are already known.

Halton Region will adopt an archaeological master plan to provide land use planning and management guidelines to protect current sites as well as assess where additional sites may be located.

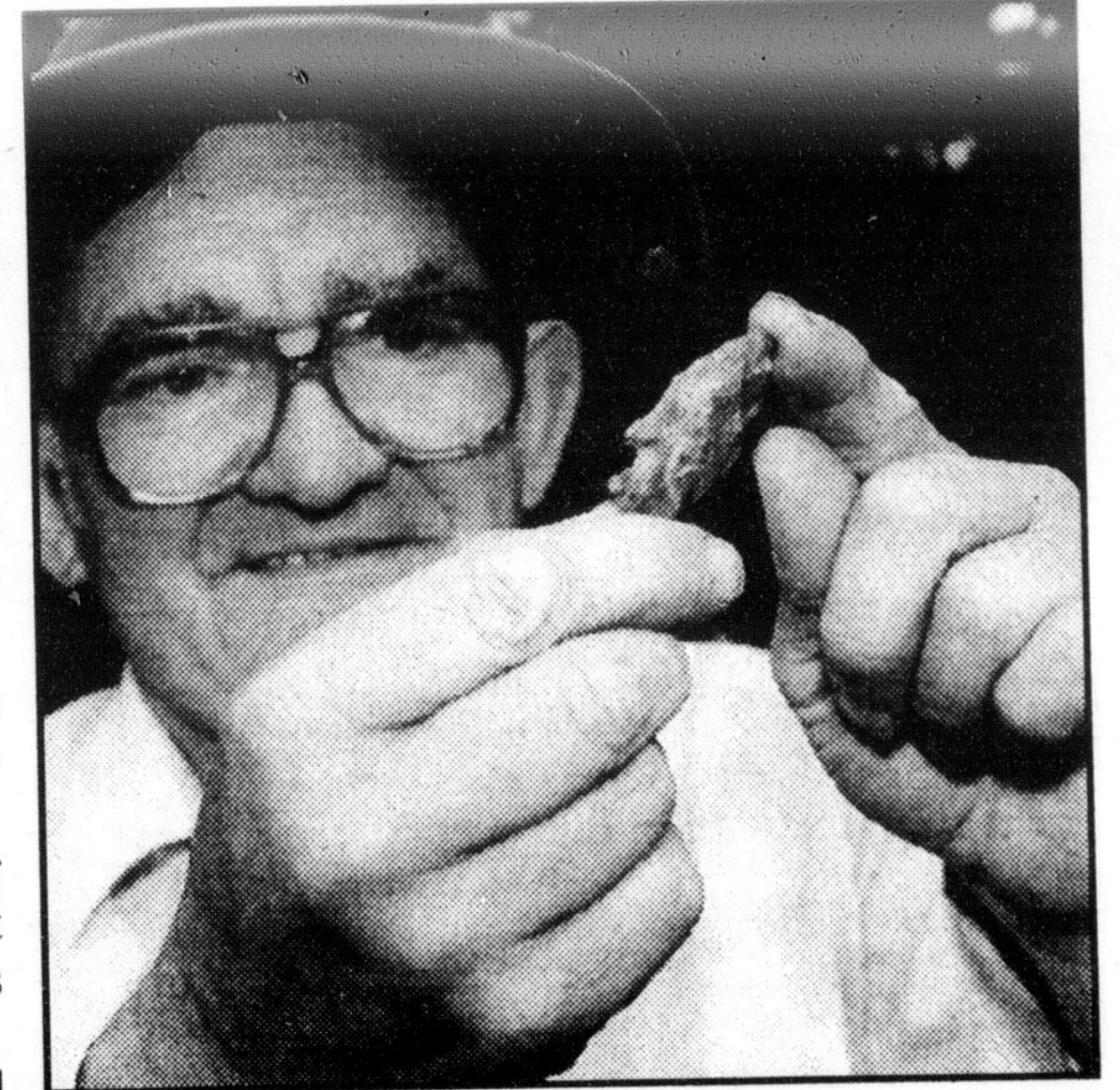
Ron Williamson, president of Archaeological Services Inc., recently presented a draft of the Master Plan to members of Halton's planning and public works committee.

"This will help us decide more precisely when to apply archaeological conditions to development approvals," he said.

On most large-scale projects the archaeological conditions are imposed, however the new master plan will refine when this actually happens, he explained.

Mr. Williamson explained that if a proposed development is in an area where an archaeological site might be expected the condition would be automatically applied. If the master plan shows a low probability for archaeological remains then no condition would be applied to the proposal.

The master plan identifies all known sites, including ones that were identified by the public. Mr. Williamson said most sites were located through the environmental assessment process or planning act



file photo

Halton is rich in archeological sites inhabited by native people. assessments.

Clusters of archaeological sites are in the Bronte Creek basin and have been found since the 1970's, he said. Interestingly but perhaps not surprisingly most sites are within 200 meters of creek tributaries rather than near the lake itself.

The plan takes into account land and vegetation, to see if there is a correlation. Various soils might indicate agricultural practices while the presence of cedar swamps apparently made for a major source of timber for native villages.

While most land in urban areas has been disturbed it is still possible to find archaeological sites on school yards, parks or golf courses, Mr. Williamson said.

The final master plan will be brought forward to Halton council for adoption in September.

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Halton Region Planning and Public Works