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Many citizens still wary of Drury development project

By **KAREN SMITH**
The Champion

Many Miltonians who live near the 32-acre site of a proposed development behind the E.C. Drury High School complex still oppose the project — if a meeting Thursday night is any indication.

Despite several modifications made to the plans by developer Dave de Sylva, several nearby residents want the land left as green space to be used as a park.

“Over 80 per cent of people in the area support leaving it as parkland,” said Craig Hughes of Childs Drive, referring to an informal survey he conducted among residents.

Another man said once the land goes, “it’s completely gone” and an alternative site would be more appropriate.

Meanwhile, some people among the crowd of about 50 supported the proposal to build a nursing home and condominiums geared for senior citizens.

“I think it’s a terrific place for seniors to be,” said a woman.

Another person in attendance said he felt the issue was creating an uncomfortable division between area residents and local seniors.

“It’s two noble issues playing against each other,” he said.

Mr. de Sylva, part owner of HD Investments Inc., hosted the meeting at E.C. Drury High School to present the revised plan he created after residents

expressed disapproval at a public information meeting in December.

He said the new proposal kills a controversial entranceway near Beaver Court and Gowland Crescent and diverts traffic to an existing roadway on the north side of the property.

The plan has also been revamped to cut down the number of proposed condominium units from 229 to 180, but they would be larger, from the previous 25 feet to 33 feet wide. And the number of trees designated to be removed would be reduced, he said.

Mr. de Sylva said some people have indicated to him that they appreciate the modifications.

“There seems to be more support there, but there are still some people who can’t accept that there’s going to be changes (on the site).”

Under his original plan, the soccer field would be relocated on the same property and the tennis court would remain in place. That’s still the same.

A related bone of contention was raised by members of the deaf community, who were disappointed to find no interpreter at the meeting despite a promise made by Mr. de Sylva.

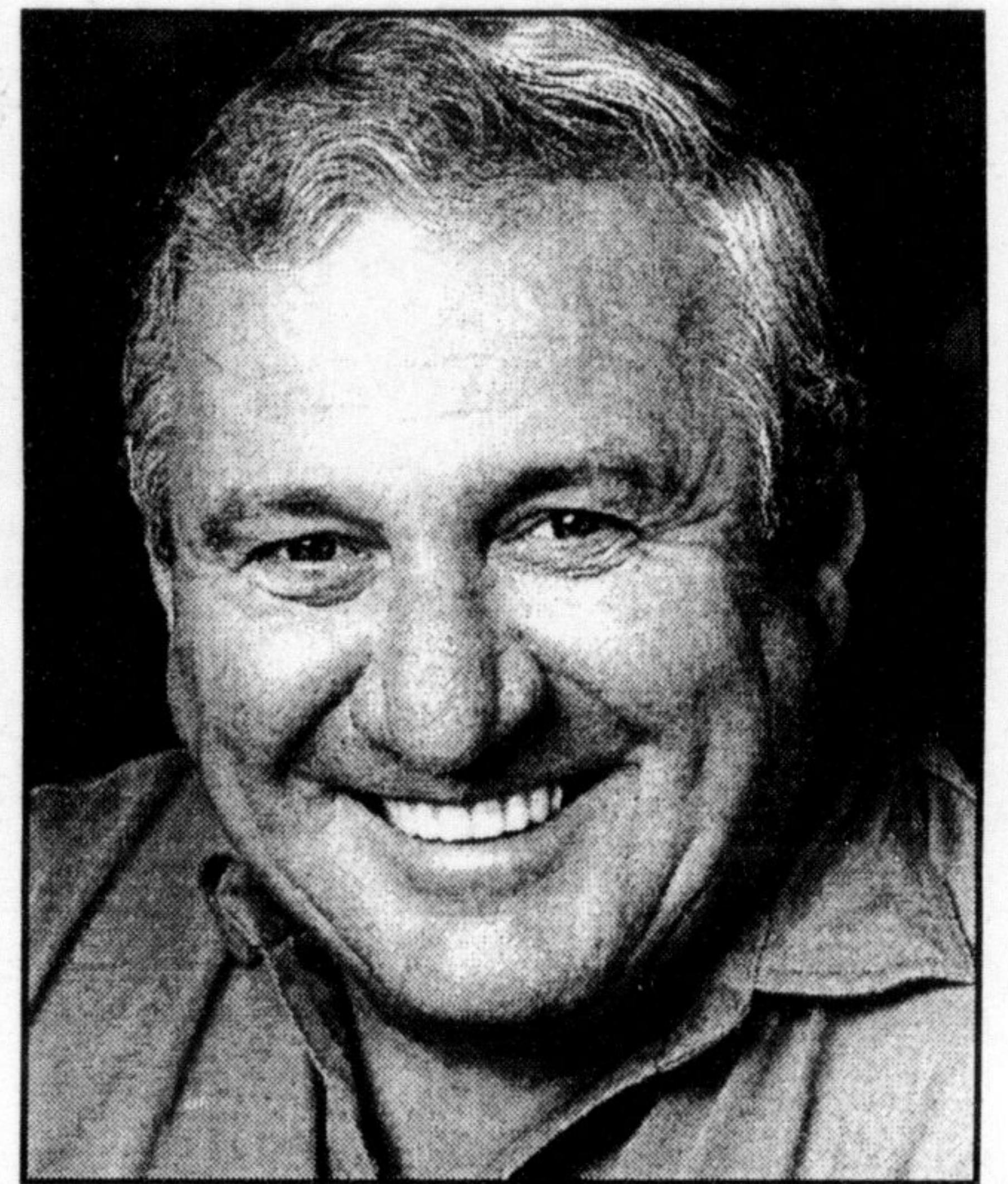
“Their voices can’t be heard,” complained Carole Sharp of the Milton Deaf Action Group.

Mr. de Sylva, who told deaf people in December that an interpreter would be provided at the next meeting, said he tried to arrange one 10 days ago, but no one was available.

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Julian Reed

Reed says Liberals taking the safe route

• from CHUDLEIGH on page 1

That’s one way of looking at it, agreed Mr. Reed.

“Various political parties put their own spin on these things that have a social aspect,” he noted. “We’ve made certain choices and hopefully we can claim we’re choosing safety.”

Though the Liberals have made a series of small cuts in EI, they don’t cover the CPP payroll tax increase, said Mr. Reed.

That’s because walking into an \$8 billion EI debt when the Liberals took power in the early 1990s has made his government leery of dipping into the fund despite the large surplus.

It’s a way of safeguarding the future, he said.

“Economies wax and wane,” said Mr. Reed. “When the time comes that there is a downturn, at least that fund that has been building will be there.”

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