



COMMENT

Council's decision on Drury deal a hard sell

Given the realities, it was hard to imagine a better deal.

The latest development proposal put forth by H.D. Investments on a 33-acre site behind the E.C. Drury complex would have returned 45 per cent of the land to the Town to be used as greenspace. About 80 per cent of the woodlot would have been saved and a dire housing crunch for senior citizens would have been alleviated through 195 bungalow condominiums.

But a tight 5-4 vote by town council torpedoed the deal Monday night, much to the relief of the assembled residents.

However, their relief is probably premature, since the developer will likely take his case to the Ontario Municipal Board where it's hard to imagine he'll lose. And the proposal he'll take there may not be as generous as the one just rejected.

No one wants to lose greenspace. No one wants the deaf community to see their heritage parcelled off to the highest bidder. But the land was put up for sale. The Town couldn't afford to buy it, so someone else did. It's too late for the accusatory list of 'what ifs'. History can't be rewritten and this land will probably never be a park -- especially not now that the best deal Milton was likely to see has been sacrificed at the expensive altar of wishful thinking.



OUR READERS WRITE

NHL funding

Liberals should get their house in order

Dear Editor:

Re: Halton MP Julian Reed against NHL small cap bailout.

It's no time to pat yourself on your Liberal back, Mr. Reed.

While the government's about-face is a wholly-appropriate non-action and, as usual, a few steps behind what the public already determined for itself and were against, I'm more inclined to want to see what can be accomplished with real problems.

The Liberals are incompetently running departments, namely immigration,

human resources and multi-culturalism, where the misrepresentation of our assets is in the billions of dollars.

It would be nice to hear from you on the tough issues as well, Mr. Reed, not just the popular and marshmallow-soft ones.

When you have completed your tasks for which you were elected and "put your own house in order," I'll be the first in what would be a long line, I'm sure, to then pat you on your back.

Jon J. Komow
Ontario Street North

Region alone can't tackle gridlock: chair

Dear Editor:

The January 21 issue of the Canadian Champion featured an editorial titled 'Traffic headaches turning into migraines'.

While this editorial was correct in stating that traffic gridlock is one of the biggest problems facing Halton, we disagree with the suggestion that all levels of government have failed to respond to this problem. At Halton Region, we have addressed this issue for more than a decade.

The editorial notes that the construction of Hwy. 407 near Sixth Line should ease some of the load. In fact, it was Halton Region which, over the last 12 years, repeatedly approached the Province to secure the construction of Hwy. 407.

To encourage car-pooling, we obtained a commitment for Hwy. 407 commuter parking lots including one on Derry Road for Milton and Halton Hills residents. We were the only Region to achieve

this.

Halton Region was instrumental in getting the GTA Regions, Hamilton-Wentworth and the City of Toronto together to discuss a new transportation partnership with the provincial and federal governments. In addition, we arranged for the Region's four chambers of commerce to meet with our area MPs and MPPs so that provincial and federal governments could understand the impact traffic congestion has on the business community in Halton, and the need for a partnership to deal with a solution.

Your readers should know that Halton contributes more than \$10 million to GO Transit and will be responsible for upwards of \$150 million in capital improvements to that system over the next 10 years. We secured service improvements, additional money for local transit services that connect to the system and expanded parking lots. We are also looking into a new station on

Winston Churchill Boulevard. That will serve Milton and Halton Hills residents.

Moreover, Halton Region has comprehensive master plans that, over the next 15 years will invest \$111 million in improvements for highways 5 and 25. Council also approved a major road plan that will enhance transportation on Derry Road and Steeles Avenue in Milton and Halton Hills.

As you can see, Halton and our local municipal partners have not stood idly by. We identified priorities, invested in projects, prepared plans and secured funding. We cannot do this alone. A partnership is required with senior levels of government, and Halton Region will continue to work, as we have for more than a decade, to find solutions to our transportation problems.

Joyce Savoline, chair
Brent Marshall, chief administrative officer
Halton Region



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Pud

by Steve Nease

