



COMMENT

Eight months not long to plan major overhaul

It's no wonder the Halton District School Board is feeling time pressure following the release of recommendations for the biggest overhaul of schools this region has ever seen.

This sweeping and stunning consultant's report, unveiled at Wednesday night's committee meeting, recommends spending \$409 million over 20 years to build and renovate public schools.

In Milton, it calls for the closure of E.C. Drury High School in 2013 and elementary schools Martin Street in 2001/02 and P.W. Merry in 2004/05. The plan also suggests building two new high schools and an unclear number of elementary schools over the next five years in the town's urban expansion area.

The board is required to submit a long-term plan to the Education Ministry by mid-October. We wonder if they will have enough time to do it.

As Burlington trustee Sheila Flook points out in a story elsewhere in this newspaper, residents have called her with numerous inquiries.

Concerns include where children will go after changes, boundary alterations, how much public input will be allowed and the plan's lack of flexibility. We're looking for more information as well on the recommendations for Milton to determine their feasibility and we're hoping to get answers soon.



OUR READERS WRITE

Gambling funds not worth it in long run

Dear Editor:

I am writing in response to the recent article in which the mayor so proudly displayed a cheque for \$2.5 million from the Ontario Lottery Corporation from the slot machine revenues.

It has become apparent that we are living in ignorant times when we can feel proud about creating revenue from such a negative source as gambling. Not only are we going to suffer economically in the long run but we also will suffer the affects of the slots on ourselves internally.

Whether you believe it or not the little benefit of the short-term funds gained

are not worth the suffering of even one individual who will unintentionally become addictive and possibly end up broke, dead or mentally ill.

Myself an ex-gambler, I have come to realize that all I can do as I watch the situation unfold is pray and ask our creator to show the true effects of gambling.

Anyway, the bottom line is some people will read this and agree and others will deny. But one thing is for sure. We will die with the decisions we make so hopefully we will use wisdom and not ignorance.

**Rob (Musaab) Heft
Milton**

Drury battle only just begun, says reader

Dear Editor:

Three cheers to all of those actively involved in opposing HD Investments' proposal to develop 33 acres of land by the E.C. Drury complex.

You won this round. But the battle to keep the land as a park has "only just begun."

Our family moved to Milton 23 years ago. We have watched our children grow up playing sports at the E.C. Drury complex.

Now we take walks there regularly. It is a wonderful, peaceful park.

I learned recently at a town council meeting how impassioned many groups and individuals are about keeping the land use as it is now. We chose to live here because Milton was a small and friendly town. It was a great place to raise a family.

Our neighbourhood was fortunate enough to have the E.C. Drury complex as a safe and welcoming park.

Now it is up for sale. The Ontario government owns the property.

We all know that Mike Harris has no heart. To them (the provincial government) it is just surplus land so sell it! The land is zoned institutional. The current development proposal required rezoning.

Our brave town council voted down the proposal. But now the proposal can be reviewed by the Ontario Municipal Board and possibly go ahead.

Concessions such as keeping the woodlot and tennis courts could go out the window. We are now committed.

Residents, special interest groups and town council must rally together and continue to advocate keeping the land use as a park.

Town council earlier decided that it would be too costly to buy the land from the Ontario government. I hope they have the opportunity to revisit this idea.

Now they must realize the signif-

icance of the property in the town's make-up.

With the support of special interest groups and residents I hope the Town of Milton can regain the opportunity to preserve the heritage and uniqueness of this area.

Friday's Champion showed Mayor Gord Krantz accepting a cheque for more than \$2.5 million from the Ontario Lottery Corporation for the town's share of five months' revenues from the new casino.

Wouldn't it be ironic for the council to vote the use of these Ontario government windfalls to purchase the land from the Ontario government.

**Nancy Craigie
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by Steve Nease

