



COMMENT

Councillor's absences have come too often

Ward 3 Councillor Lieven Gevaert is probably a nice, well-intentioned man. When he says he's doing his best to keep up with issues affecting his Nassagaweya riding while working as a consultant in Israel, he probably is.

Good intentions were certainly revealed when he saved taxpayer's money by voluntarily eschewing his \$11,684 annual stipend.

And good intentions are lovely. But they don't have a vote on council. Neither does Mr. Gevaert when he's in a different country.

According to a recently-released attendance report, Mr. Gevaert showed up for just 20 out of 47 meetings in 1999.

And the situation isn't about to change soon, as Mr. Gevaert's Israel contract has been extended for another few months.

That means he may be back in time to begin campaigning for the municipal elections in November.

If he does, constituents should know that a vote for him on the ballot could mean not having a vote in council chambers about half the time. They should know that good intentions and good representation don't always go hand-in-hand.



OUR READERS WRITE

Help appreciated

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank the good Samaritan who took the time to clear out the end of my driveway and several others on the street February 14 at lunchtime.

It's very good to know that one still has neighbours that will help one another in times of need like we have on George Street, and I'm sure that it was greatly appreciated by all the households.

Once again, thanks.

Michael J. Wareham
George Street

Letters welcome

The Canadian Champion welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit, revise, and reject letters.

Letters must be signed and the address and the telephone number of the writer included.

Mail letters to: The Canadian Champion, Box 248, Milton, Ont., L9T 4N9, or leave them at our office, 191 Main St. E.

We don't have to agree with you, councillor

Dear Editor:

Re: Letter 'Seniors' needs ignored by five councillors' (February 11).

It was with some disbelief and then growing anger that I read Councillor Rick Malboeuf's letter to the editor.

Once again, after not getting his way at council, Mr. Malboeuf chose to attack his colleagues and those of the public who disagree with him through this paper.

I believe *The Champion* should charge for these letters, which are more political advertisements than letters to the editor.

The root issue of his letter is the proposed E.C. Drury development. However, I wish to focus on the misinformation contained in Mr. Malboeuf's letter. He says "the report from ESAC mentions the need for this type of housing" for seniors to be able to look after themselves. The article in *The Champion* of February 9 quotes the report as identifying the need for

"affordability" and "accessibility." This is stressed throughout the article. The article points out that the report identifies 50 percent of Halton's seniors living on less than \$20,000 per year and a further 15 per cent are below the poverty line. Affordable housing means payments of \$500 or less.

Mr. Malboeuf, like the developer, is content to use the remaining 35 per cent as justification for this development. I would argue that those 35 per cent aren't where our priority lies when talking about affordable housing for our seniors.

For the developer and Mr. Malboeuf to use the issue of seniors' housing to create 195 single-family dwellings and attack political foes is unacceptable.

The developer can not prove that these units will be for seniors only as he knows that the Charter of Rights will prohibit such a designation of a housing subdivision. Further, the price of the units has been rumoured to be as high as

\$200,000. Does this meet the ESAC's urgent needs for "affordable" and "accessible" senior accommodations?

Mr. Malboeuf has made his position clear this it's not worth fighting to save a few trees. In my opinion, it's worth fighting for not only the trees, but also for what is right. Using our seniors to mask the real design of this proposal and score political points is wrong.

Mr. Malboeuf should know that in a democracy, not all of us have to agree with his ideas. Sometimes, when you lose you have to be big enough to accept it -- in this case the will of council and many of the citizens of Milton.

Sometimes the more the odds are stacked against you the more you have to be willing to stand up for what is right.

Many a losing fight has turned into victory because the truth wins out. This is such a fight.

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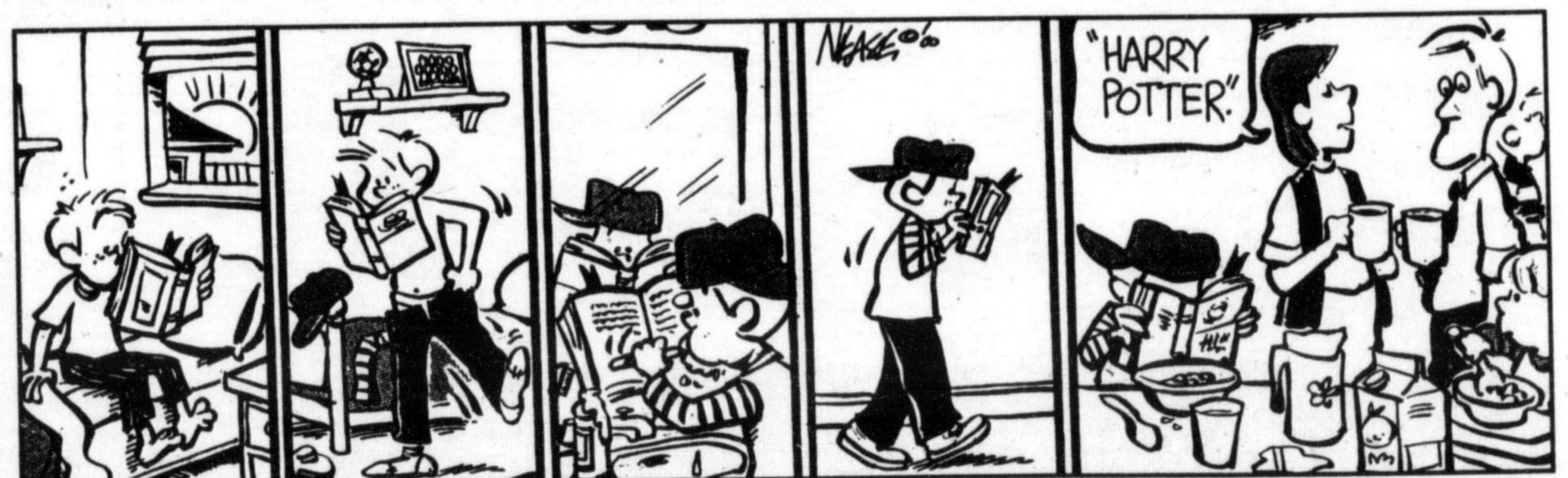
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by Steve Nease