



COMMENT

Housing needed now

The posturing by the Province about providing some public housing makes for tidy press releases but does nothing to solve the critical lack of such housing in Ontario.

Instead of taking a pro-active stance and building such housing, the Province has handed over \$1.4 million to Halton Region for capital improvements to existing stock and to cover administrative costs for social housing programs.

In a region bursting at the seams with growth, there are only 1,820 housing units, apartments and townhouses for seniors, the disabled, those on social assistance and the working poor. The situation is so ridiculous that there are more than 1,800 names on a housing waiting list that could see applicants wait seven years for appropriate shelter.

Queen's Park is big on inviting the private sector to participate in such construction schemes, but they've stayed away in droves. Only privately-owned co-ops and non-profit projects have been built here to provide housing for 2,200 lower cost housing units. But neither government nor the private sector has built rental accommodations in Halton for six years.

The Province's response to all of this has been to download responsibility for social housing to municipalities without handing over adequate funding to make such programs work.



OUR READERS WRITE

Want a tax rebate? Tell your councillor

Dear Editor:

Milton council approved a new budget with no tax increase, but we should hold our applause. It will again collect about \$9 million in taxes — almost \$600 on average per household — which is about the same amount it has received to date from slot revenue.

There will be new arenas, soccer fields, a library, a cultural centre, etc. There will be a give-away of \$500,000 in grants to groups through the new Community Fund. What do existing taxpayers get? Nothing.

I was at the March 19 meeting when

Councillor Rick Malboeuf raised a motion to give taxpayers a 5 per cent rebate on this year's taxes. Councillors Ken Keates and Art Melanson supported the motion while others rallied to defend their windfall revenue against this taxpayer assault. The same tired spin was heard, "The slot revenue may not continue, so we can't rebate to taxpayers" and "Taxpayers don't want a rebate."

Those who object to council collecting taxes while hoarding the slot revenue should speak to their councillor.

Gary Ellis
Milton

Maybe the next Lifestyles article should feature a picture of an intermodal terminal

Dear Editor:

In the April 6 edition of The Champion, the beauty of our local area was featured in the Lifestyles section.

Reporter Steve LeBlanc's article referred to "scenic surroundings" and "great look-outs of the escarpment." It was supported by Graham Paine's striking photo of a family at Rattlesnake Point.

But the idyllic view of our countryside becomes fragile and threatened when juxtaposed with the information written in a letter to the editor, which appeared just a few pages away in the same edition of the newspaper.

It seems ironic that both the cele-

bration and the devastation of nature were included in one issue. Perhaps this contrast went unnoticed by many readers because they're not yet aware of the magnitude and the potential impact of CN's plans.

In her letter, K. Anne Lasby warned us about what will happen when CN's huge intermodal terminal defaces many hectares of property in Milton. It's surprising that this role has not been assumed more readily by reporters. Some investigative journalism could help to make citizens more aware of the details of an insidious development, which could ultimately have a very negative effect on their lives.

Maybe the next Lifestyles article should feature a photo of an intermodal terminal and people could picture a view of the future from Mount Nemo.

A sequel to your article that boasted the headline 'Local area virtual haven for outdoor enthusiasts' might eventually have to be, 'Local area destroyed so outdoor enthusiasts resort to virtual reality hiking on the Internet'.

I plan to attend the information meeting Wednesday at Halton Region to find out more about the proposed changes to our community.

Margie Simms
Milton



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Pud

by Steve Nease

