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JUNE 15**  
Grande Festival  
Parade,  
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Area, Tribute  
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Performances  
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Jazz, Blues,  
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CAPE BRETON  
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DAVID USHER  
Sat. June 15 • 9:30 pm



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# Response quiet to group home bylaw revisions: public meeting

By RICHARD VIVIAN  
*The Champion*

Proposed revisions to the Town's group home bylaw were received with little opposition during a public meeting Monday.

The Milton administration and planning committee held the meeting on the matter, but didn't take an official stance on the issue.

While no public opposition was raised by the proposal, representatives from both Community Living North Halton (CLNH) and the Bob Rumble Association for the Deaf threw their support behind it.

"I think this represents a fair compromise

between the needs of deaf people who have an intellectual handicap and also the needs of the community to make sure their neighbourhoods are safe," offered Bob Rumble representative Brad Sanders.

An individual did rise to ask questions surrounding notification of neighbours around proposed group homes, but didn't offer an opinion on the draft bylaw.

However, several councillors took up the cause, raising concerns about the lack of neighbour notification in the proposed bylaw.

"At the end of the day, it's still a public safety issue," argued Councillor John Challinor.

Under the draft bylaw, group home operators would be required to hold an open house during the registration process with the Town. Registration occurs after the facility is up and running.

Changes to the definition of a group home in the official plan and zoning bylaw essentially make up the heart of the proposed policy revisions. Under the draft proposal, group homes would be split into two separate categories, depending on the type of services provided.

Type One group homes are proposed to consist of single-unit residences for the aged, persons with disabilities and child and family services. These facilities would be limited to between six and eight residents in the urban area and between six and 10 residents in rural settings.

Type Two group homes carry the same restrictions to resident levels, but would include uses such as transient care and drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation.

Under either category, group homes are required to be licenced, approved, supervised or funded by the Province.

There's currently no distinction between group home uses except for correctional facilities and occupation limits are set between six and 10 residents in both urban and rural locations.

No changes are being recommended regarding correctional group homes, which are limited to institutionally zoned areas.

Public notification also isn't required, as group homes are permitted in all residentially-zoned areas.

Through the division of group home categories, the proposed revisions would allow the Town to restrict Type Two residences to locations on major arterial, arterial and collector roads.

Councillor Wally Hunter also raised concern about the number of individuals being permitted to reside in a single group home. "If it's a residential house, there should be some restrictions similar to what other residential houses in the neighbourhood have. People don't have 10 people living in one residential house without having to go through some kind of re-zoning."

But according to Ruth Victor of BGD Consulting, the firm hired by the Town to study the issue, reducing the maximum limits further would likely force the closure of existing group homes and restrict any new ones from opening in town.

Comments received during the public meeting will now be considered when Town staff prepare a technical report on the issue. The report is expected to be addressed by town council July 22.



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## St. Paul's ready to celebrate 150 years

St. Paul's United Church will celebrate its 150th anniversary Sunday with an elaborate heritage service at Victoria Park.

Members will gather in the Town Hall parking lot at 10:15 a.m. and walk together to the park for the 10:30 a.m. service.

The walk will feature children carrying a banner, the choir, the church's ministers, vintage cars and a saddle bag preacher representing the Methodist roots of the congregation.

Individuals are asked to bring lawn chairs and lunch for an outdoor picnic. In case of rain, the service will be moved inside the church. For more information, call (905) 878-8895.



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