

# Preserving core's heritage is focus of meeting

By STEPHANIE THIESSEN

The Champion

Frustration and disappointment were in ample supply at last week's meeting of downtown business and property owners.

Strengthening Downtown Milton Through Historic Preservation was the official name of the meeting held June 15 at Hugh Foster Hall, but the questions and comments posed by attendees at the end of the meeting lacked the positivity the name seemed poised to inspire.

Disappointment was evident even before the meeting began. Although 350 invitations were sent out for the evening, only about 30 people showed up.

"I'm frustrated because we never do anything," said Marsha Waldie, who said she's attended her share of similar meetings. "It becomes a 'See you next year.' We haven't got a lot of shopkeepers (attending) because they've come out in the past. Having this

**"Having this once a year says nothing. We have to get everyone on board."**

**MARSHA WALDIE**

once a year says nothing. We have to get everyone on board."

The forum hosted by the Town and Heritage Milton gave the downtown business and property owners in attendance a chance to express their frustrations about the downtown core.

Some attendees, like Jennifer McConnell of Pickets and Primrose home décor on Main Street, commented it isn't easy to contribute to downtown Milton's worth when she's at the mercy of her landlord — like many shopkeepers.

"Everything we've done we've done ourselves with our own money," she said of her building, adding she'd even be willing to split the cost of paint to improve the exterior facade of the store.

Others agreed and also aired their concerns about landlords who don't care about the properties they manage.

Ward 4 Councillor John Challinor addressed the issue, saying, "Have some strides been made? Yes. It's largely been made through new landlords. We need more of that — people who have a vision for their building and a respect for heritage."

Another issue discussed was the sort of businesses that attract people to the downtown core.

Ward 2 Councillor Mike Boughton, who operates a barbershop on Main Street, said he'd like to see more "basic" retail establishments, and was met with a chorus of agreement.

"We have to try to locate and find different retail businesses."

Long-time Milton resident Jim Dills said he thinks there should be fewer services on Main Street.

"I think the ice cream shop (attracts) more pedestrian traffic than all the lawyers and accountants combined," Mr. Dills said.

Mr. Challinor said it often all comes down to money, and posed a question to attendees.

"Would you be willing to take some of your tax dollars and invest it in the downtown core? Because at the end of the day, that's what it's going to take."

Grace Saunders said it's up to Milton residents to take a stand for historical buildings.

"All our heritage buildings are susceptible to demolition, no matter what municipality they're in. It's not policies that protect these communities, but people who come in and say, 'There's a benefit to this (preserving heritage).'"

Several audience members voiced their concerns that the downtown would soon lose its charm and not be distinguishable from the rest of Milton.

Other concerns were expressed about what will happen to Milton's downtown core when the Wal-Mart and other big box stores arrive.

Stella Parton, who has lived in Milton her whole life, said residents need an affordable grocery store downtown, particularly with the high number of seniors living in nearby apartment buildings.

"As part of the Official Plan review, we're going to look at all that," said Mel Iovio, the Town's director of planning and development. "I think the downtown needs to re-invent itself to keep a strong centre."

Also at the meeting was Niagara-on-the-Lake's director of planning, Stephen Bedford, who spoke about how the much-loved town got its start.

Jim Watson, who owns the historic 'Thompson Hotel' on Main Street, built in 1847, discussed the importance of investing in downtown Milton properties.

Ken Keates, chair of Heritage Milton — which is made up of citizens, elected representatives and municipal staff — said although the evening raised some challenging questions and issues, it was worthwhile.

"It boils down to commitment, patience, love and resources," he said. "We have something to work with, and I'd like to see Heritage Milton take a key role with this and get the turtle to run a bit faster."

Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at [sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com).

## Psychiatric testing sought for accused

A Milton man who pleaded guilty to possession and distribution of child pornography earlier this month will make another court appearance Tuesday.

Kirk Scott Pierrepoint, 34, appeared at the Ontario Court of Justice in Burlington Wednesday before Judge R. LeDressay to set the date.

Mr. Pierrepoint's lawyer, Mark Miller, told court he's trying to arrange for psychiatric testing and a risk assessment for Mr. Pierrepoint and required extra time to do so.

"Arranging for testing while he's in custody is difficult," he told the court.

Judge Lesley Baldwin denied the release of Mr. Pierrepoint June 9, despite Mr. Miller saying it would make securing a date for the testing easier.

Mr. Miller told the court he hopes to have an order for the testing ready to be signed by the judge at the next court appearance.

Mr. Pierrepoint of Oriole Court pleaded guilty to two child pornography charges along with the charge of possession of a controlled substance June 9.

His Tuesday court appearance will once again be held at the Burlington court house.

# TOYOTA

Lease or purchase a new Toyota and receive up to

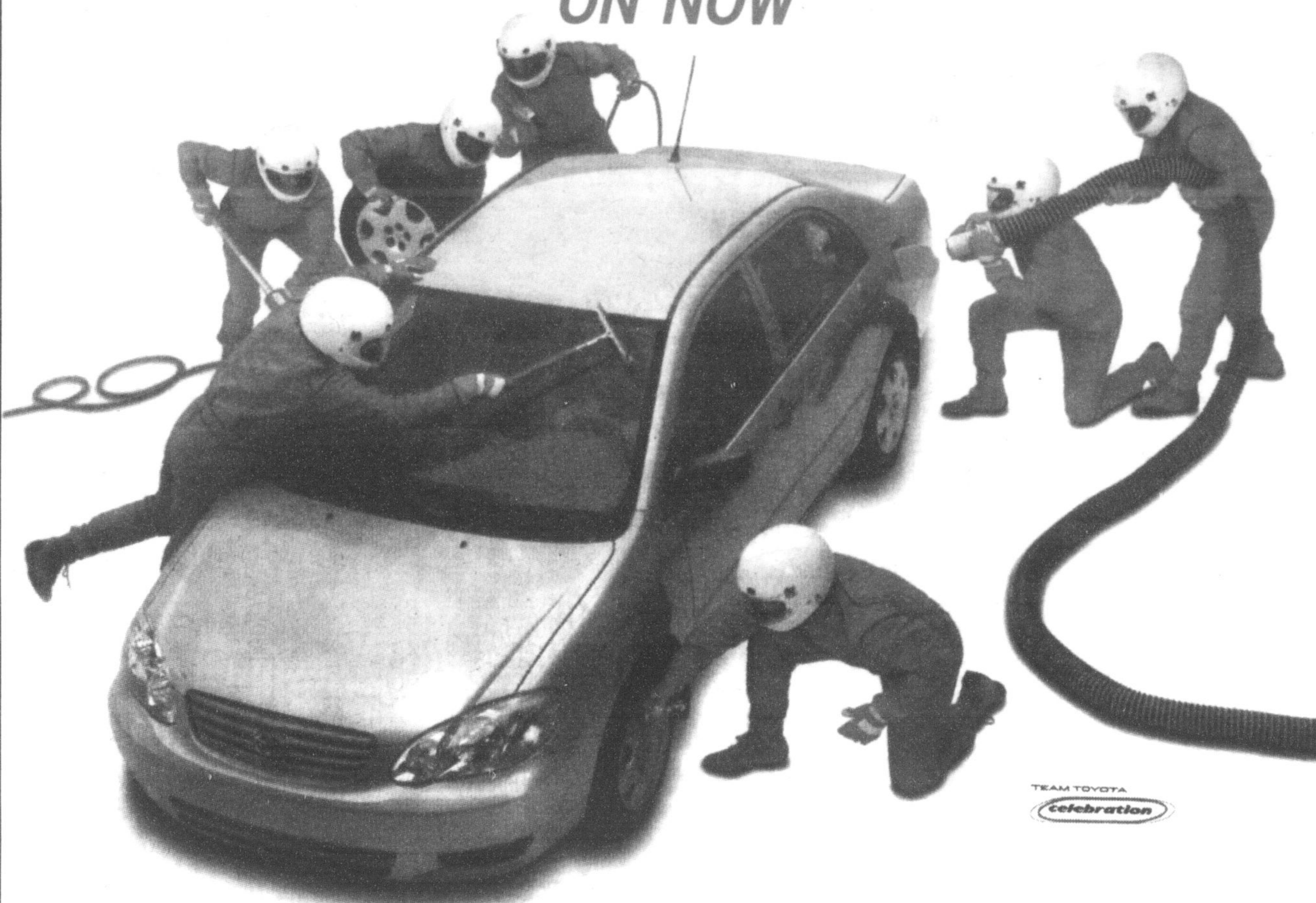
# 500 LITRES OF GASOLINE

ON ALL VEHICLES\*

PLUS

NO SECURITY DEPOSIT ON ALL 2004 LEASES\*

ON NOW



June 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>

# 3-DAY PIT-STOP EVENT

MILTON  TOYOTA

400 Steeles Avenue 905 875-1700

[www.miltontoyota.com](http://www.miltontoyota.com)

