

Residents lined up to speak about greenbelt plan

By MELANIE HENNESSEY
The Champion

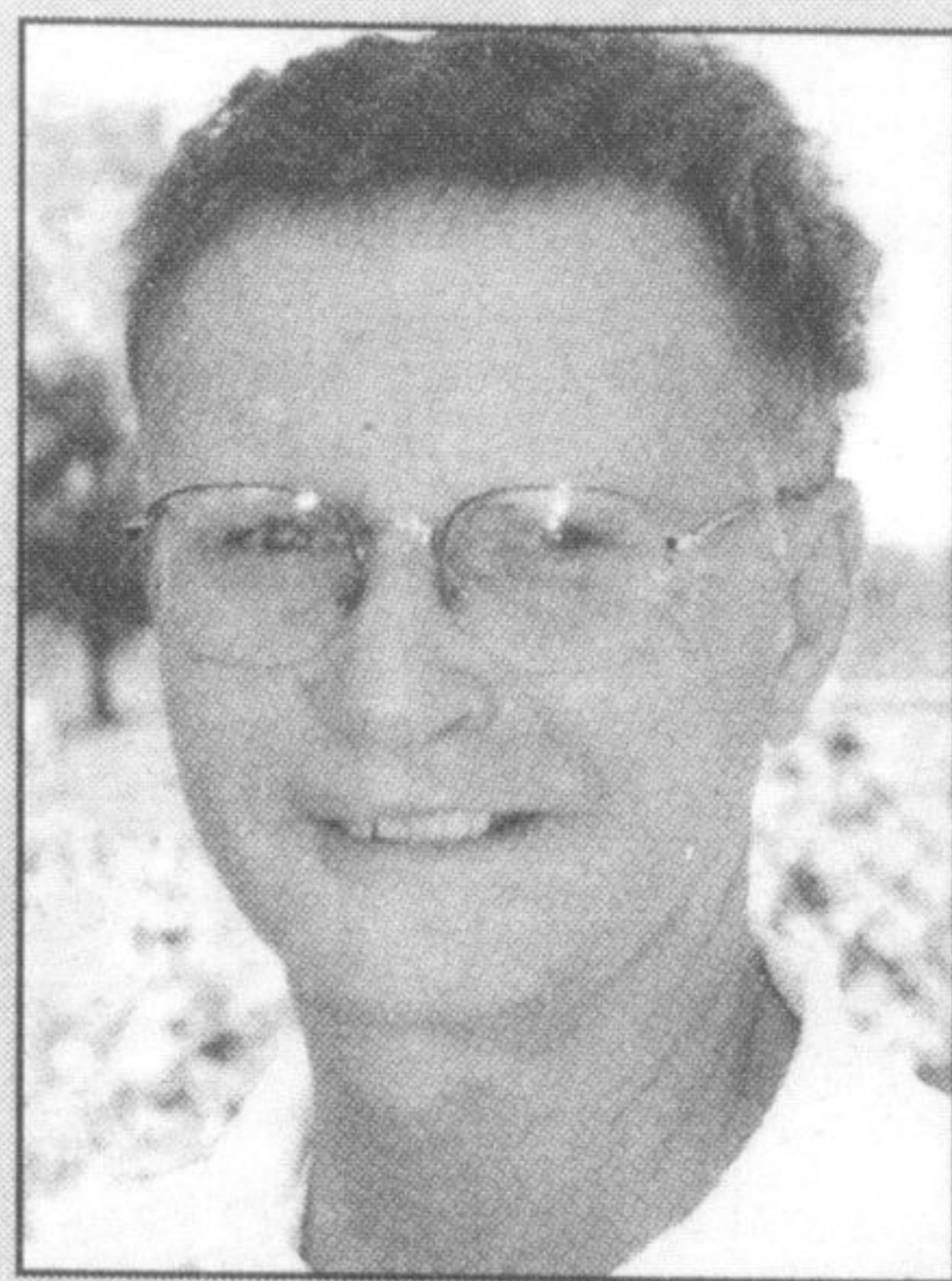
Halton's planning and public works committee will hear from at least two dozen residents tomorrow on the Province's greenbelt plan — more specifically, the approximate 4,400 acres of Halton Hills land regional council recommended adding to the protected area.

Council approved a motion at its meeting last month to allow delegations on the topic at tomorrow's session. The decision arose following the Province's deadline extension for public comment on the greenbelt to March 9, as well as Halton Hills council's January 14 decision to rescind its request that the 4,400 acres of land, which separate Milton and Halton Hills, be included in the greenbelt plan.

One local resident who will speak at the meeting is farmer Bert Andrews, representing himself and the Halton Scotch Block Farmland Owners Group. He said he will recommend the committee uphold the decision of Halton Hills council in rescinding its motion.

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BERT ANDREWS



Some of Mr. Andrews' concerns with the greenbelt concept that he'll present include its impacts on farm viability and equity and the science used to map the greenbelt area.

"We're all convinced it's (mapping) based on political science," he said. "An explanation must be given to each landowner explaining why the lines are placed in a particular spot."

He added that he also doesn't think the Province has allowed for proper consultation on the subject.

At last month's regional council meeting, Regional Chair Joyce Savoline said the committee session will allow for "a full airing of the issue and the residents can be heard."

"I can't wait to hear what the public has to say," she added. "I really believe this is the best approach to the matter."

So far, 25 speakers have been added to the agenda, including individuals representing the Milton Rural Residents Association, the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture and Protect Our Water and Environment Resources (POWER).

The greenbelt plan aims to create a permanent countryside in the Golden Horseshoe region, swathing through Halton. It would encompass the Niagara Escarpment Plan and Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and also protect natural abutting features, covering about 1.8-million acres from Niagara Falls to Peterborough.

The committee meeting will take place at 9:30 a.m. in Council Chambers at the Halton Regional Centre, 1151 Bronte Rd., Oakville.

Those who haven't pre-registered as a delegation can still be added to the speaker list through the clerk's office at the beginning of the meeting.

The committee will forward a recommendation to council on the 4,400 acres, which will be considered at its March 2 meeting.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at mhennessey@milton-canadianchampion.com.

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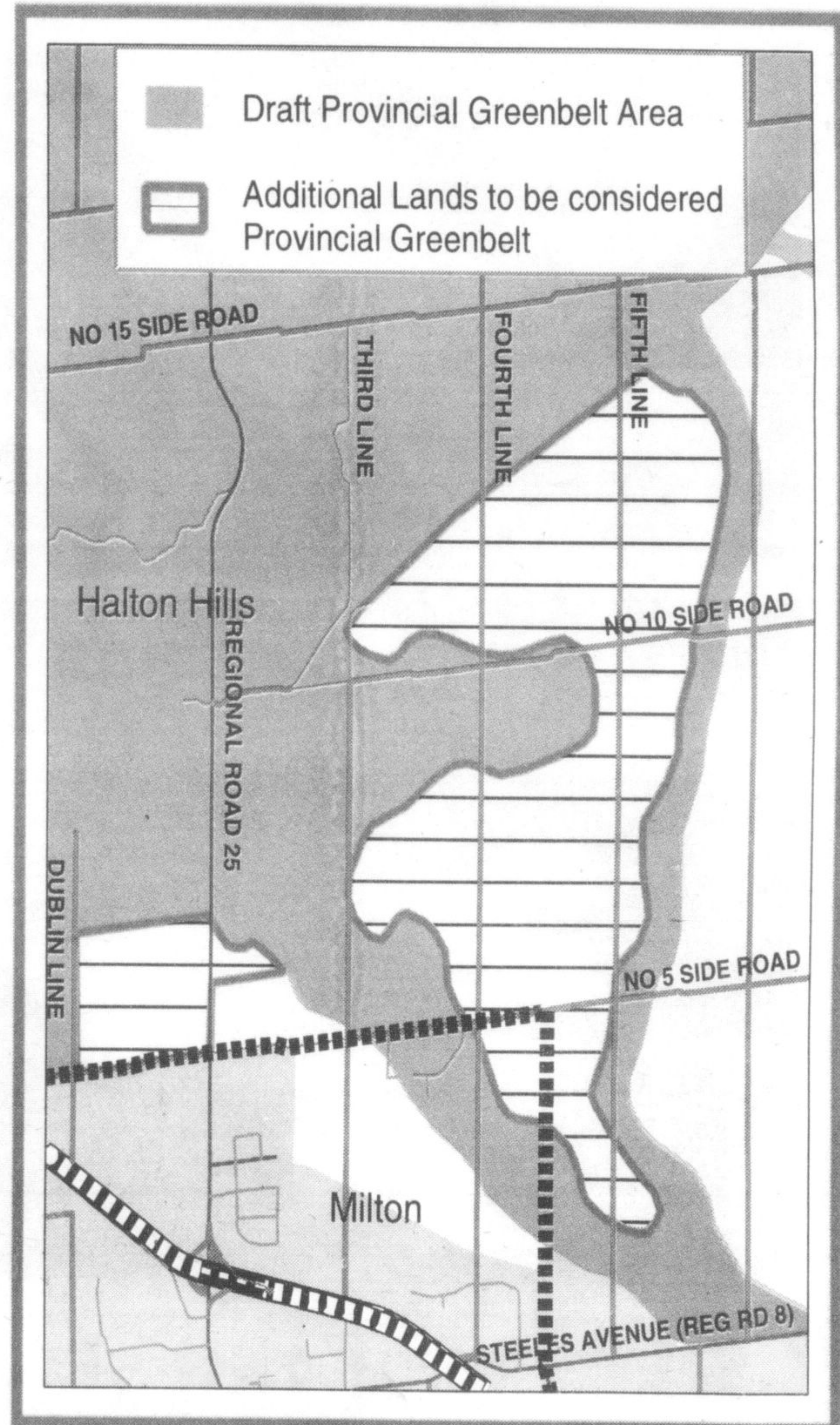
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New school named Hawthorne Village

The new elementary school scheduled to open in September in Milton's east end will be called Hawthorne Village Public School.

This is the name Halton District School Board trustees selected Wednesday from a shortlist of names collected in suggestion boxes at Chris Hadfield Public School and the Milton Public Library.

An open house will be held in May for parents with children attending the new school. The specific date, time and location of the open house will be sent home with currently-enrolled students. The information will also be posted on the board's Web site, www.hdsb.ca.

The new school, which is currently under construction, will be located at 850 Bennett Blvd.