

OPINION

Welcome measure

When should a municipal council meet 'in camera', or behind closed doors?

That has been the burning question in local council chambers lately now that Bill 123 — the Transparency in Public Matters Act — has been proposed by the Province.

The potential legislation would place additional restrictions on holding closed meetings — a move that has area residents cheering and councillors cringing.

Halton Regional Chairman Joyce Savoline recently deemed the legislation as an "excessive measure." She also said she feels the Region is already "as public and transparent" as it can be.

Although we're sure that's true, we don't think

there's anything wrong with pushing councils to be just that much more transparent. And if in the process councils discover they're already doing everything right, then kudos to them for being leaders in public accountability.

While we have no reason to believe current councils aren't following the rules and going in camera unnecessarily, there's no guarantee that future councils will follow suit.

Therefore, we disagree with the Region and the Town of Milton on this issue and support the proposed act.

As defenders of the 'public's right to know', we urge the Province to put the legislation in place to ensure residents have the openness they deserve.



ReadersWrite

Send us your letters to miltoneid@haltonsearch.com or drop them off at 875 Main St. E.

Poor timing of light at Fifth Line and Derry Rd. making congestion worse

DEAR EDITOR:

I thought blocking off access to the 401 via Fourth Line before James Snow Parkway was completed was bad enough, but this is unacceptable.

Not only do I have to battle with commuters desperately trying to make their way to Trafalgar Road so they can get on the highway, but an additional 10 minutes minimum has now been tacked on to my drive due to a very poorly timed light at Derry Road and Fifth Line.

Don't get me wrong, a light was necessary at this intersection. But I fail to understand how Derry Road commuters traveling eastbound only have an additional 30 or so seconds of green light over those waiting on Fifth Line.

Has anyone even calculated the ratio of commuters on Derry Road over those

on Fifth Line? Obviously not.

You know the situation is bad when the new light becomes a hot topic for all my colleagues making the same trek as I do each day. I don't understand how you can develop a town but not the roadways leaving it.

I would love to work across the road from my house in Milton in order to avoid traffic, but comparable job opportunities just aren't available. As a result, I need to leave town daily, which is becoming increasingly difficult.

The lack of infrastructure leaving Milton and planning is just mind-boggling. Someone, anyone, help me understand before I pack up and ship out for a town that allows me to come and go efficiently.

KARA POWELL
MILTON

Article didn't tell whole funding story

DEAR EDITOR:

Thank you for the excellent coverage on Rose Cherry's Home for Kids on the front page of the January 31 Champion.

As an organization, we're thrilled to be in a position to make such positive front-page news, a position that we wouldn't be in without the support of the Milton community.

I would like to rectify one oversight, and that is that the home has been the beneficiary of annual funding dollars from the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) for the past year in an amount similar to the Ministry of Health

and Long-Term Care commitment of \$250,000. In fact it was the MCYS that put us in a position to get the home operational and providing respite service that made us an attractive candidate for pediatric palliative funding.

In any event, it's the combination of a private charitable initiative, community support and base government funding that has allowed Rose Cherry's Home for Kids to provide important care and support to chronically-ill children and their families.

DAVID C. BOWKER., PAST CHAIR
ROSE CHERRY'S HOME FOR KIDS

These days, road signs need to be more visible

DEAR EDITOR:

A major cause of road accidents is the failure of the public to heed traffic signs. Senior drivers are also faced with reduced visual acuity and lessened cognitive abilities. Traffic signs need to be legible and sufficiently conspicuous to overcome the limitations of cognitive deterioration that comes with aging and eyesight.

The current standard for road signs in Canada was developed in 1945 based on the U.K model designed by Jock Keiner and Margaret Calvert in the early '30s. Since then, the average mortality age has been steadily climbing together with the numbers with reduced visual acuity. Municipalities the world over are endeavouring to make improvements. A 1990 study showed that traffic signs need to be 30 per cent larger for older drivers to match the response of younger drivers. A 1994 study showed young drivers' reading capacity of current main intersection street signs as 600 feet in daylight and 300 feet at night.

The road signs in Milton are based on the 4/3-inch letter size model. It doesn't cost any more if the road signs within the developments are standardized at 4 inches; all capital; cut from reflective tape on a vinyl-coated aluminum plate. In addition, all new traffic lights should be of the latest type showing the clock time for the amber light to change to red.

A year ago, I had made these suggestions to the traffic department. Thanks to the inertia that appears to prevail, nothing has been done.

On a recent visit to China, I noted that their municipalities have already implemented these proposals. Perhaps others will now join me in asking for these improvements to be given some status and priority considering their implementation are low-cost items.

DOUG DEANS
844 SOMERVILLE TERRACE

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875 Main St. E.,
Milton, Ont. L9T 3Z3

905-878-2341

Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943
Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364
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Circulation: 905-878-5947

Publisher: Ian Oliver

Associate Publisher
Neil Oliver

Advertising Director
Wendy McNab

Managing Editor
Karen Smith

Production Manager
Tim Coles

Circulation Manager
Charlene Hall

Office Manager
Teri Casas

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