

Irate woman attacks Town's handling of two home sales

By Melanie Hennessey
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

An irate local citizen took Milton Council Chambers by storm last week, yelling at Town staff and council, pointing fingers and throwing out accusations of "dirty politics."

In what Mayor Gord Krantz described as one of the "worst" delegations he has dealt with in four decades of politics, Bell Street resident Lora Belvedere-Brittain fervently spoke about concerns she has with the Town's process for selling and moving two Mary Street homes to make way for more Town Hall parking.

Heritage assessments were conducted on both homes and Heritage Milton subsequently recommended they be moved rather than be demolished due to their intrinsic heritage nature and the desire to retain the houses in the historic downtown area.

But Belvedere-Brittain took issue with the fact one of the homes was sold for \$1 to Sedgwick Marshall Heritage Homes — the business of a Heritage Milton member — and then moved to a lot on Robert Street for \$29,000 at the Town's

expense.

She alleged that's a conflict of interest that makes her "sick."

"Milton is not immune to dirty politics," she shouted. "I want answers for the taxpayers of Milton."

She also alleged that nobody else was made aware the home was for sale.

Now the Town is planning to move the second Mary Street home to an empty Town lot it declared surplus beside her parents' property on Bell Street and sell it through a real estate agent. The municipality will again cover the cost of the move.

But Belvedere-Brittain contested that as well.

"I would like you, Mr. Krantz, to sell me the other house for \$1 and I would like you to move it to the lot next door to my dad for free," she said.

She suggested putting the house up for bid for \$1 in the newspaper and letting her father buy the subject lot.

"I want you to give it (the lot) at fair market value. We want the taxpayers of Milton to get their money of what the lot is worth," she said emotionally. "He (her father) just wants the

property so he'll have a little bit of privacy."

Krantz told her that she had made some "pretty serious allegations," and asked her to "just stand there and be quiet for a moment" so staff could explain the public process the Town followed for the Mary Street homes.

Director of Community Services Jennifer Reynolds said a request for proposals for the purchase and relocation of the homes was advertised on the Town's Web site and two other bidding and purchasing sites, as per the Town's policy.

It was also advertised in the newspaper in April 2005 and, between the two different properties, four proposals were received.

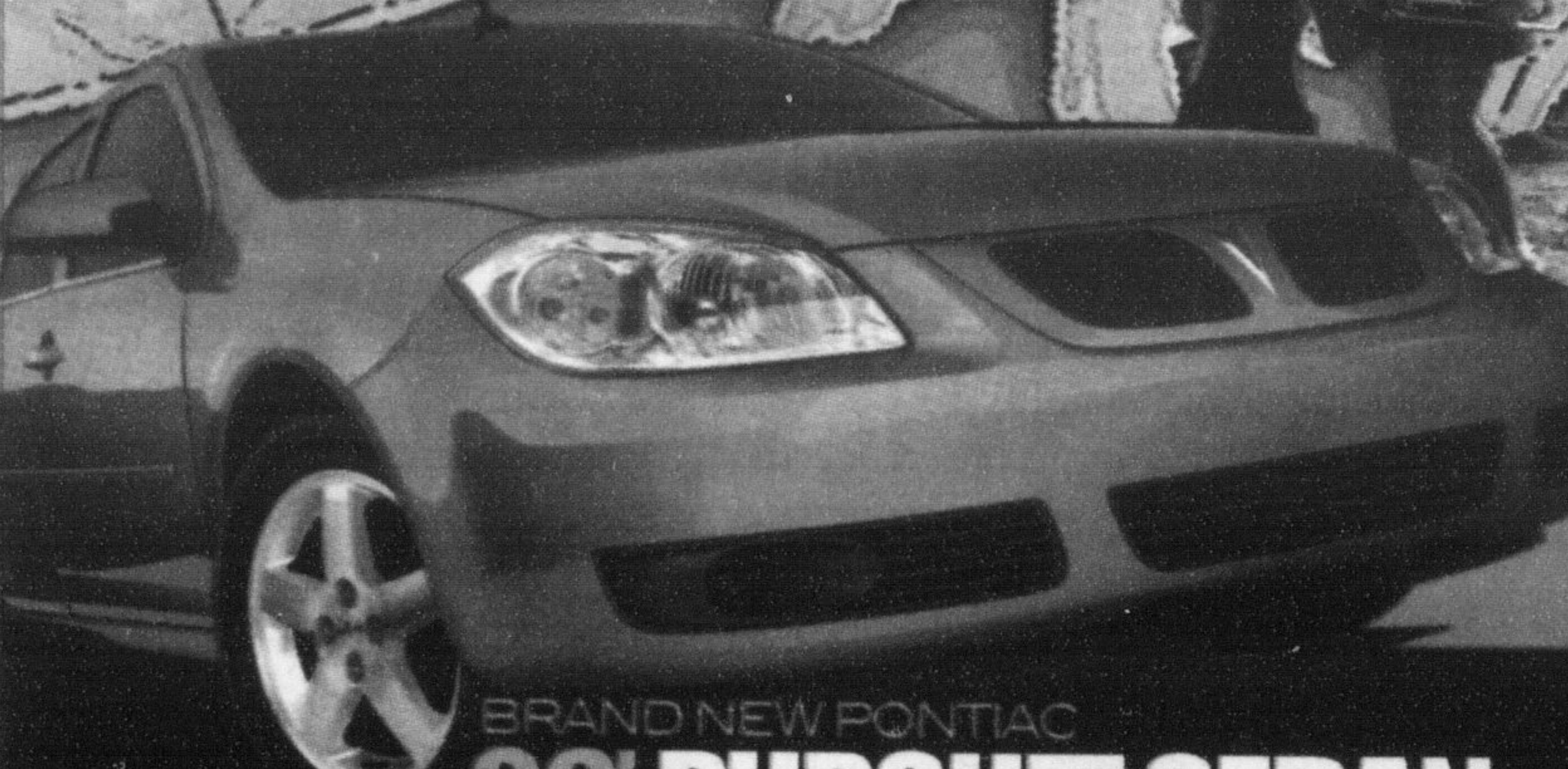
Town Clerk Troy McHarg emphasized the home that has already been sold went through an open and transparent request for proposal process, with council ultimately awarding it to a "successful proponent."

Also, The Champion found that minutes from a Heritage Milton meeting where the two Mary Street homes were dealt with show Mirella Marshall of Sedgwick Marshall Heritage

• see WOMAN on page A4

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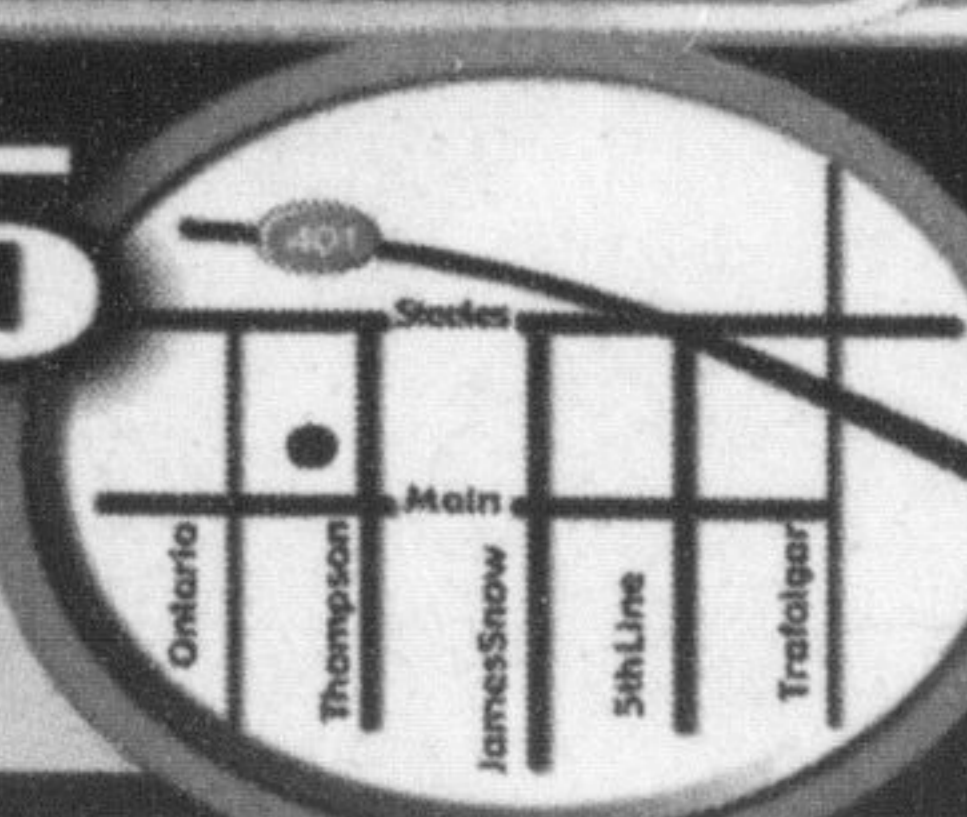
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