

Town planning industrial lands in southeast Milton

By Melanie Hennessey
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

As north Milton's industrial land supply is quickly dwindling, the Town is turning its attention toward planning a business park at the southeast side of town.

The municipality's administration and planning committee got the ball rolling on the Business Park II Secondary Plan process Monday evening after learning from staff that if serviced employment land continues to be used up at the current rapid rate, it will be built out in five to six years.

"It's time to bring on more industrial land, certainly from an economic development perspective," said Town Director of Planning and Development Mel Iovio.

Now staff wants to prepare the lands south of Hwy. 401, between James Snow Parkway and Sixth Line, for a future business park.

Iovio noted the area, which covers approximately 1,930 acres, has always been identified as business park phase two lands in the Official Plan.

"The Secondary Plan can't change the designation on this site," he said.

Ward 1 Councillor Brian Penman asked if there'll be a buffer between the residents in the area and the new employment lands.

Iovio said that issue will be looked at, but noted it could be dealt with by having less intensive industrial uses along James Snow Parkway.

"James Snow Parkway is a buffer in itself," he remarked.

A report from Iovio explains the purpose of the Secondary Plan is to provide greater detail on things like the preferred range of employment uses, urban design, transportation and parks and open space systems.

It also notes that much of the current industrial land holdings in Milton are controlled by just a few developers who are anticipating large projects that exceed 350,000 square feet, which leads to significant land absorption.

"As developers wait on larger projects, without additional land supply, Milton is vulnerable to losing the opportunity to accommodate smaller or more diversified projects in the market," the report says.

According to Town staff, building permits were issued for 1.8 million square feet of new industrial and commercial development last year that absorbed about 143 acres of employment land. And this year, close to one million square feet of new industrial space has already been secured.

Milton currently has 2,417 acres of serviced employment land, with 529 of those acres sitting vacant.

The committee endorsed a motion that calls for Town staff to initiate the Secondary Plan development immediately.

The motion will go before town council May 28 for consideration.

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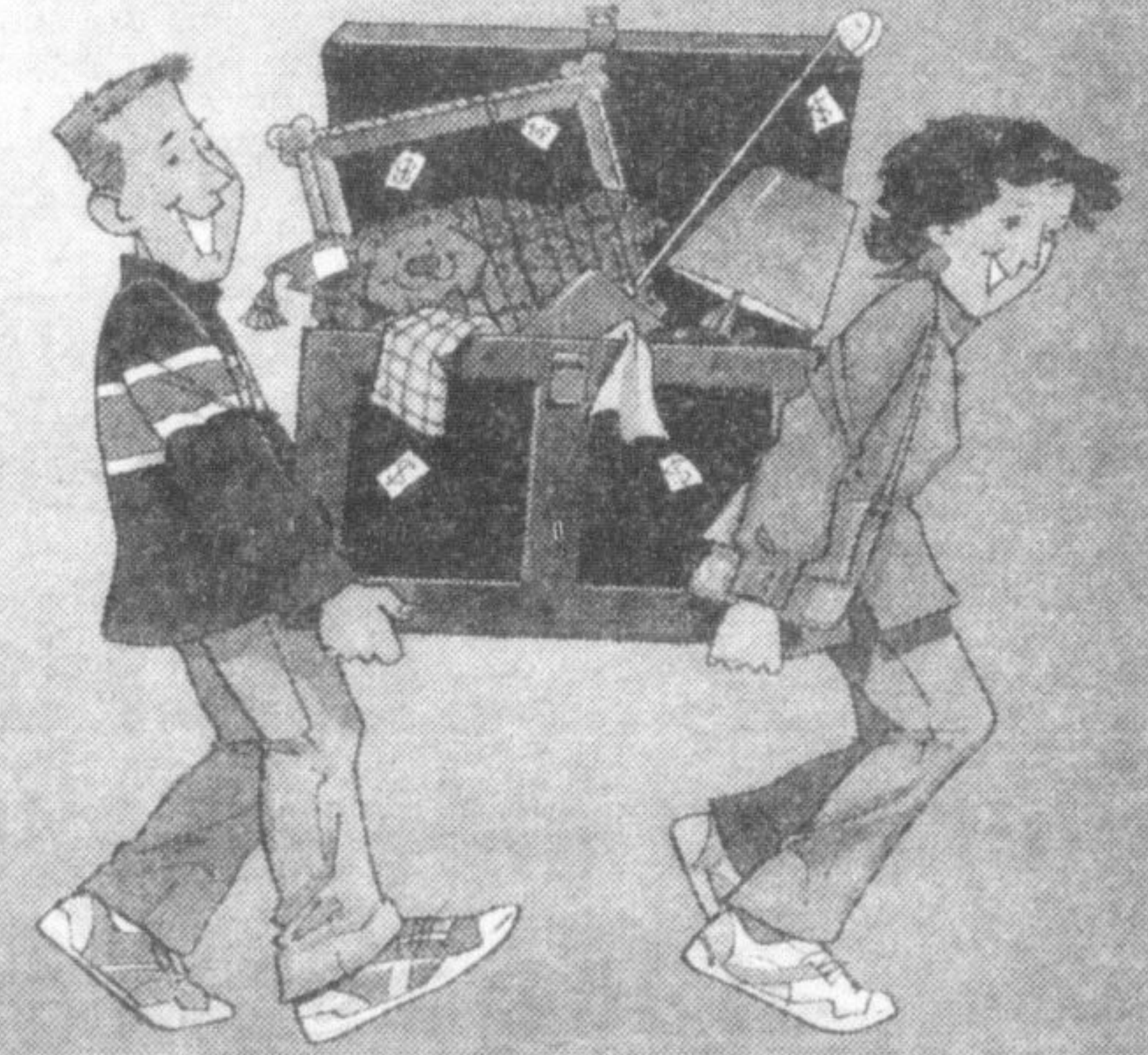


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