

Region to seek funding for assisted housing projects

By Tim Foran

CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Halton Region will ask for \$17.4 million in economic stimulus funding to build two assisted housing projects totalling 145 units in Milton and Burlington, if council signs off on the request at its meeting today.

The funding application would be sent to the Province's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

If approved, the money will come from a \$364 million joint fund of the provincial and federal governments to cover much of the costs of building new rental housing for low-income seniors and people with disabilities.

Like other stimulus funds, there is a construction deadline of March 31, 2011, meaning the Region has had to identify projects that don't require rezoning approvals from local municipalities and which could be started quickly.

Regional staff are recommending to council the following two projects:

- A three-and-a-half-storey, 80-unit project to be built by Halton Region on land that it owns beside its Allendale long-term care facility on Ontario Street in Milton. The building would be constructed on the spot of the former Martin House, which was demolished by the Region in 2006, and run by the Halton Community Housing

Corporation (HCHC).

- The development of a six-storey apartment building of 65 units to be located at 538-546 Plains Rd. East in the Aldershot area of Burlington. The construction would be done by New Horizon Homes Kingsway, which would retain ownership of a ground-level commercial unit while the HCHC would own the apartments and parking lots.

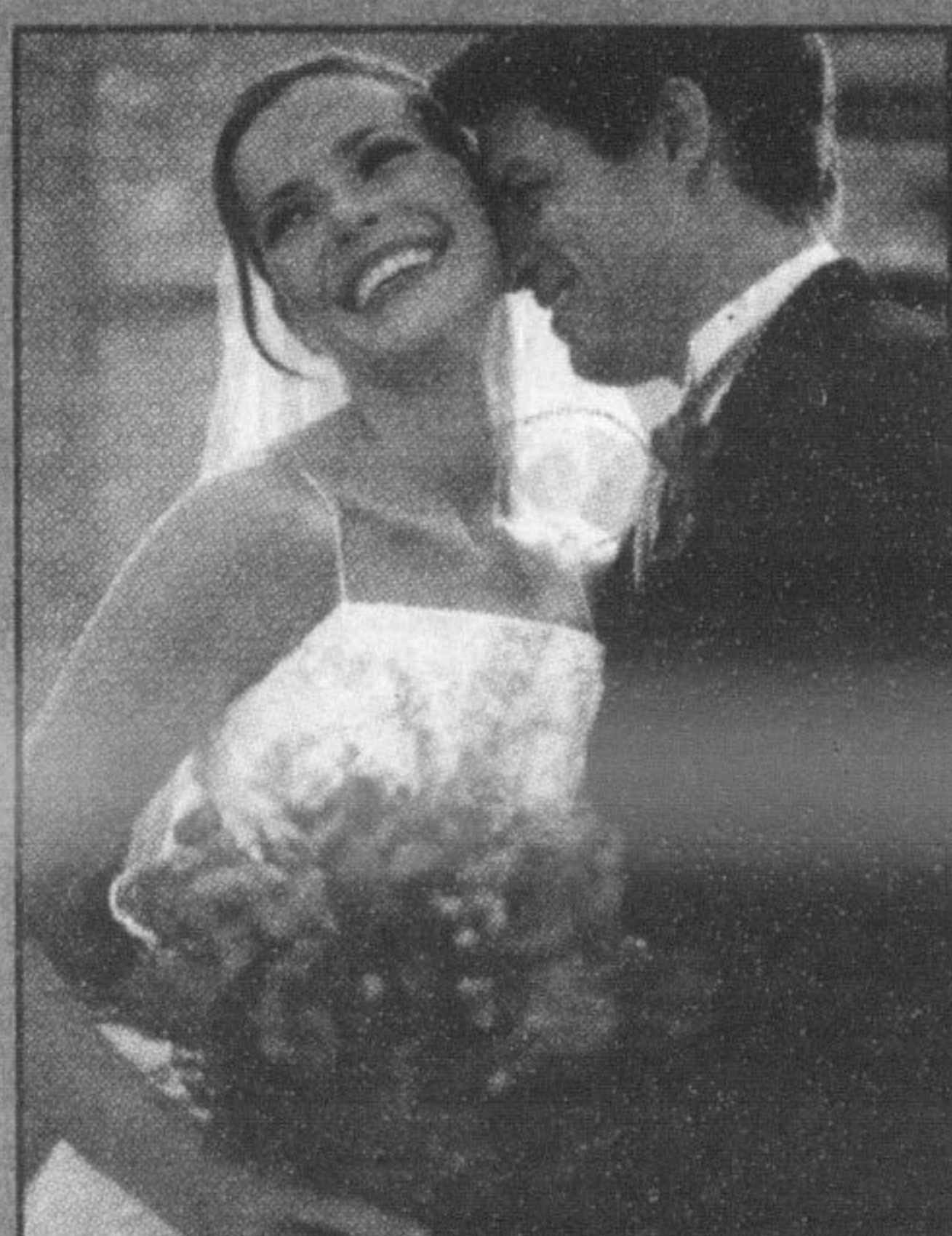
According to funding criteria, rents for the one and two-bedroom units included in the buildings cannot be set higher than 80 per cent of the average market rent for the surrounding community. That equates to a maximum of \$722 per month, based on the average rent in Halton in 2008. Applicants

for the units will be selected from the Halton Access to Community Housing waitlist.

If ultimately built, the new apartments would help the Region get a third of the way to meeting its affordable housing targets.

Approved by council in 2006, Halton's Housing Strategy envisioned the creation of 800 affordable housing units by 2015. In 2007, council approved two projects with a total 120 units, mostly targeted to seniors. The Residences of St. Andrews in Georgetown and Bonnie Place in Burlington will open next year.

Tim Foran can be reached at tforan@miltoncanadianchampion.com.



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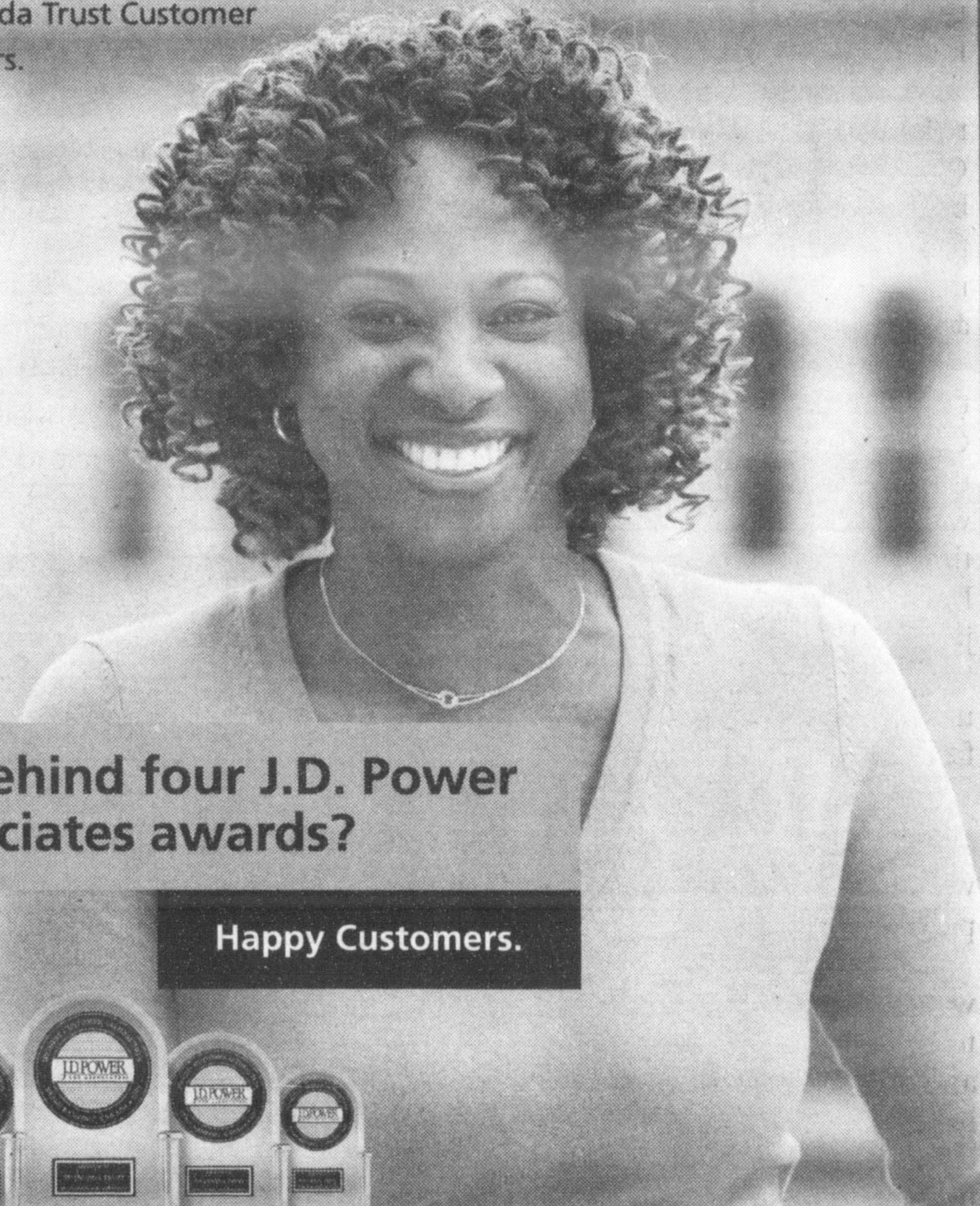


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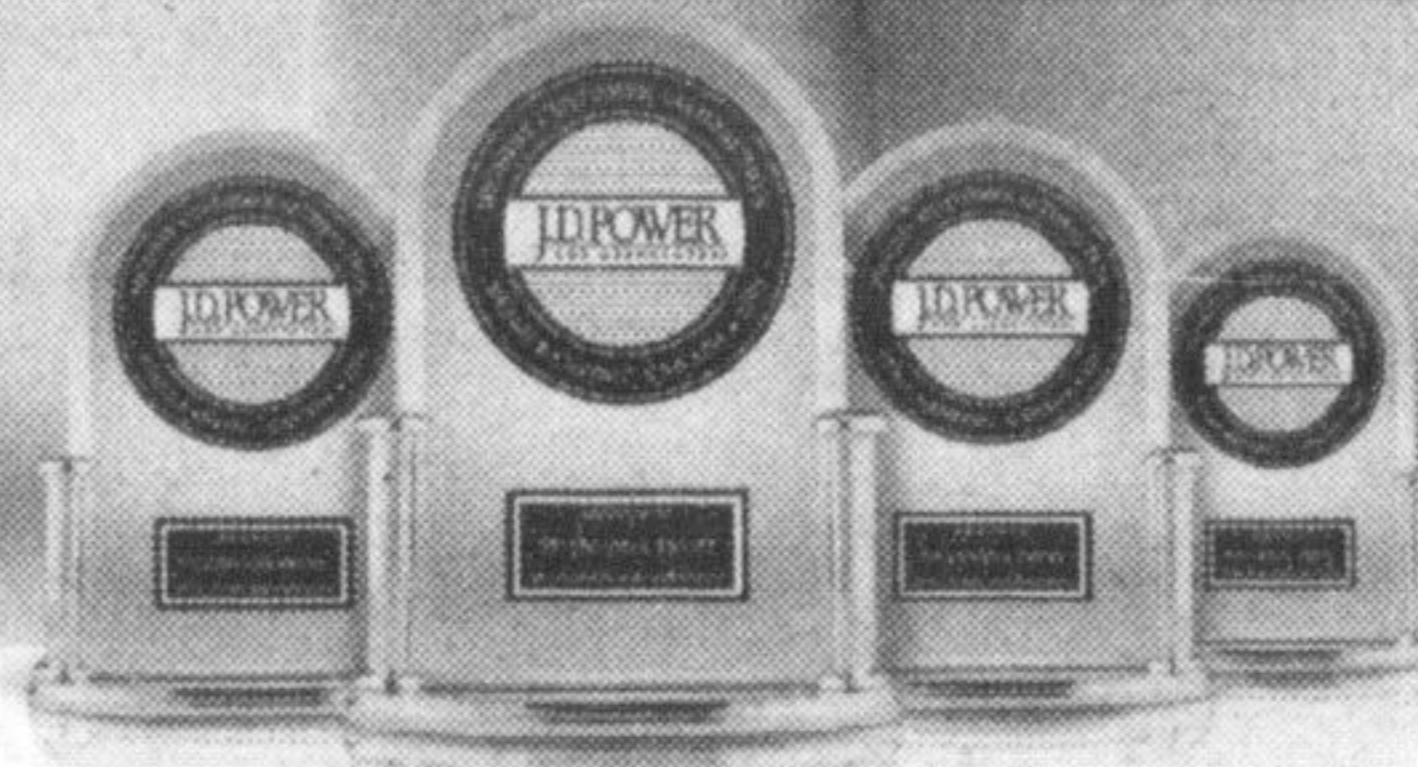


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