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Mobile homes denied residence at Milton Heights Campground

By **ROB KELLY**

Milton definitely needs affordable housing, indeed all housing, but that doesn't mean the town needs mobile homes, according to planning director Bob Zsadyani. Town council's general committee couldn't decide Monday night whether he is right or wrong.

Mr. Zsadyani put a recommendation before the committee calling on councillors to re-affirm their previous policy against mobile home parks in rural Milton. Councillors refused to do that. Instead they merely accepted Mr. Zsadyani's report for information, which means they took no action on his comments.

That leaves Conrad and Francis Sweet frustrated and angry. They appeared at general committee Monday to speak in favour of a mobile home park they have been hoping to develop for the past decade, Mrs. Sweet said. The couple owns Milton Heights Campground, a seasonal trailer park in rural Milton they want to convert into an upscale mobile home facility.

Park owners frustrated

Mr. Zsadyani contends that such an intensive land use in rural Milton is unprecedented and potentially polluting. He pointed out that the Sweets plan to have five mobile homes per acre on their site, a density similar to urban Milton subdivisions benefitting from full water and sewage disposal services. The trailer park has neither municipal service.

Nassagaweya councillor Bill Johnson had asked town staff to look into the matter as a possible method of building some affordable housing in Milton. Mr. Zsadyani believes affordable housing could be produced more effectively elsewhere, with a far lesser risk of pollution.

Mr. Zsadyani said communal well systems such as the one at the campground "are not endorsed at this time by the region of Halton," and that their lagoon-type septic units cause problems when chemicals leak into the water table. A lagoon system is essentially an open pond with water on top and sewage on the bottom. The sewage is eventually broken down naturally.

"We know lagoons are not the be-all and end-all," Mr. Zsadyani said, citing problems with the system at

Mohawk Raceway in Campbellville. "We do not want to create any more of them."

Councillor Johnson said that in the interests of providing some affordable housing in the community, alternative sewage disposal systems could be considered. Such systems include automated mini-sewage processing plants requiring little maintenance.

Mr. Johnson alluded to the fact that the province has told all municipalities they must conform to an edict setting aside 25 per cent of the housing stock for so-called "affordable" residences. "If we do have to have mobile homes we should be ready for the eventuality, we should be looking at (alternate) systems," Mr. Johnson said.

Mr. Zsadyani said affordable housing should come onstream with expansion of urban municipal sewage facilities in the next few years, and that the urban area is the natural location for affordable homes. The planning director indicated that may so-called "affordable" units are expected to be purchased by senior citizens, who will want easy access to hospitals and stores.

No tax dodgers

For their part, the Sweets appeared embittered concerning their experiences with local government. The couple said they had been unfairly depicted by councillors and in the media as providing illegal residences for tax-dodgers.

In recent months the campground has been criticized by some councillors because of a suspicion that people have been living there throughout the year. That is illegal. The campground trailer owners do not pay taxes anywhere near the level of those paid by Milton homeowners. The Sweets adamantly denied they have any year-round residents, save one employee. "This is not true and has not been true," Conrad Sweet emphasized. Mr. Sweet added that many people seem to prefer lies to the truth because "lies are more exciting."

Addressing Milton's policy against mobile homes, Mrs. Sweet added, "the common person needs housing. They (the town) are catering to million-dollar homes. There's very little for the average individual."

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