The region's land division committee had previously approved the request, but regional council, at its neeting on Wednesday, voted to support an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

Gordon and Christina Galbraith are seeking to slice off a portion of a their five hectare property in Nassagaweya in order to build a house for Christina's mother.

The region is objecting under its strict rural planning policies, which frown upon land severances in rural areas for fear it will lead to "strip development."

out a carrot with the stick - it also passed a resolution that the region assist Mr. Galbraith in his negotiations with the town of Milton to build a second house on the subject property."

While the region opposes a land severance which creates a separate lot, it supports the concept of allowing a second residence on an undivided lot for 'granny flat' purposes.

Milton councillor Brad Clements expressed disapproval at the inference that Milton is somehow lacking in its 'granny flat' policy. "Milton has criteria for granny flats," he said.

That criteria, according to Robin Kitchen, zoning officer and planner Region Briefs

for Milton, is that granny flats must be temporary trailer homes. He said permit must be approved each year to prevent any misuse.

## Slightly disappointed

Oakville councillor Tony Whitmore is "slightly disappointed" the region couldn't get this year's budget in-

crease below nine per cent. He made his remarks at a planning Regional Council, however, held and administration committee meeting Wednesday which reviewed procress on this year's regional budget.

However, he conceded that he "couldn't point to anything that you could take out."

He lashed out at the province which, he said, is directly responsible for three per cent through a "downloading of programs."

Milton Mayor Gord Krantz agreed, saying he didn't support the region having to take on court security. He also criticized new provincial guidelines suggesting that Halton region should increase its complement of public health nurses to 60 from 40.

The decisions being made by other levels of government, he said, are

budget. He termed it "big brother wielding a big stick."

Some of the provincially mandated programs, he said, could perhaps be ing the provincial funding.

Oakville Mayor Ann Mulvale cautioned that if council wants to dip below the 9.84 per cent, "we have to direct staff on which programs to cut. Let's hear about it."

As an example, she pointed to a program that had already fallen victo council's budget considerations. A recently approved regional

child care plan suggested 150 new child care spaces should be imple mented this year, but the budget is calling for only 75 new spaces.

ficer, John Fleming, agreed "a lot of funding has already been stripped out of the budget."

In assessing the forecasted needs for the region, he said staff had originally come up with a tax inbudget under 10 per cent," he said. "Our best advice to you is that this is as low as you can go."

Regional staff were instructed in December to prepare a budget with an increase to ratepayers of 9.84 per cent. That means the contribution of a homeowner with an average assessment of \$6,850 to regional government would rise to \$271 from \$247.

The region's share of a homeowner's tax bill is about 14 per cent. School taxes account for 57 per cent, local municipal services 26 per cent, and waste management three per cent. In total it results in a tax to the average homeowner of \$1,791.

The budget is expected to be ready for council's approval on March 7.

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