

Mill Street doctor looks for a cure for patient parking

The limited parking in downtown Milton will become yet more restricted if a frustrated physician makes good on his plan.

Dr. Ivan Hunter maintains a general practice off Mill Street downtown, on the east side of a small square which is bordered by various businesses but empty in the centre.

That centre space is used for free access downtown parking.

Last winter, however, Dr. Hunter erected what appeared to be a temporary barrier, poles with rope stretched across them, along one side of his sizeable property, denying access from most of the parking area.

Last week he requested the Town of Milton remove three flower boxes that either abut or partially sit on his property, so he could construct a permanent barrier to assure his patients of parking and keep out others.

According to a municipal staff report prepared by John Matthews, the Town's public works director, Dr. Hunter has experienced problems with people parking in his spaces who are not his patients, indeed even occupying the reserved handicapped spaces.

As well, Carriage Square, a nearby plaza, actively discourages tenant parking on plaza property.

Dr. Hunter has been taking the overflow employee parking from the plaza, Mr. Matthews said.

Despite that, the Town won't remove one of the flower boxes Dr. Hunter wanted out and will only take out the other two, it appears, if he forces the municipality's hand.

Dr. Hunter had asked that the flower box planted by the Town adjacent to his Mill Street building front be removed so that when he builds his permanent fence his patients can pass through the barricade at Mill Street. The Town refused.

He also asked the flower boxes at the opposite end of his property be removed, presumably to allow for barrier construction.

Mr. Matthews said the Town will have no option but to comply since

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the boxes are largely on Dr. Hunter's property.

Mr. Matthews noted in his report that a loose coalition of landowners in the downtown core had co-operated in the early 1980s to provide shared parking in the area. He said he's worried the understanding could be in jeopardy given Dr. Hunter's actions.

A Woodward Avenue resident who ended up the odd man out in a construction project has seen the Town make amends.

Last week at municipal council elected officials voted to change the metal railing in front of 274 Woodward Ave. because the resident, Jim Downs, didn't like it and because it wasn't the same as the surrounding railings.

The portion of railing in front of Mr. Downs' home is modern-looking and rounded while two nearby residences have black Victorian type railings.

The Victorian type is more expensive, and according to Mr. Downs, more pleasing to the eye. All the rails were installed atop retaining walls in a reconstruction of Woodward Avenue in the area.

Mr. Downs said he was out of the country when the project decisions were made.

Town staff said the adjoining residents got the more expensive railing because they asked for it and substantiated their cases.

One property owner said the Victorian railing was needed for safety given the new retaining wall was higher and the fact he had young children and small pets about; the second landowner lost trees in the reconstruction and wanted the more expensive railing as compensation.

Councillor Art Melanson spoke in favour of the replacement, which will cost approximately \$4,000.

"Mr. Downs expects the same fencing as his neighbours and rightly so. He put up with a lot of aggravation in the last few years (during reconstruction)," said Mr. Melanson.

Town officials are not about to give up on a proposal to have a major provincial tourist information centre located on the Chamber of Commerce property off Ontario street just south of Highway 401.

Last week, both staff and elected officials reacted angrily to a letter from the Minister of Tourism and Recreation, Ken Black, in which the minister said there are no funding programs for such a project.

Mayor Gord Krantz said a recent announcement by the Ministry of Transportation concerning resumption of a highway study for a tourist information centre in Mississauga "really did fly in the face of what the minister stated in his letter."

Town administrator Roy Main said "we just aren't prepared to accept the 'no' without further analysis. We're not taking 'no' from the minister at this point."

In his report, adopted by council, Mr. Main proposed town staff, in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce, move ahead with surveys on the subject, register disappointment with the Ministry stance and go on record expressing "concern" over the Mississauga proposal.

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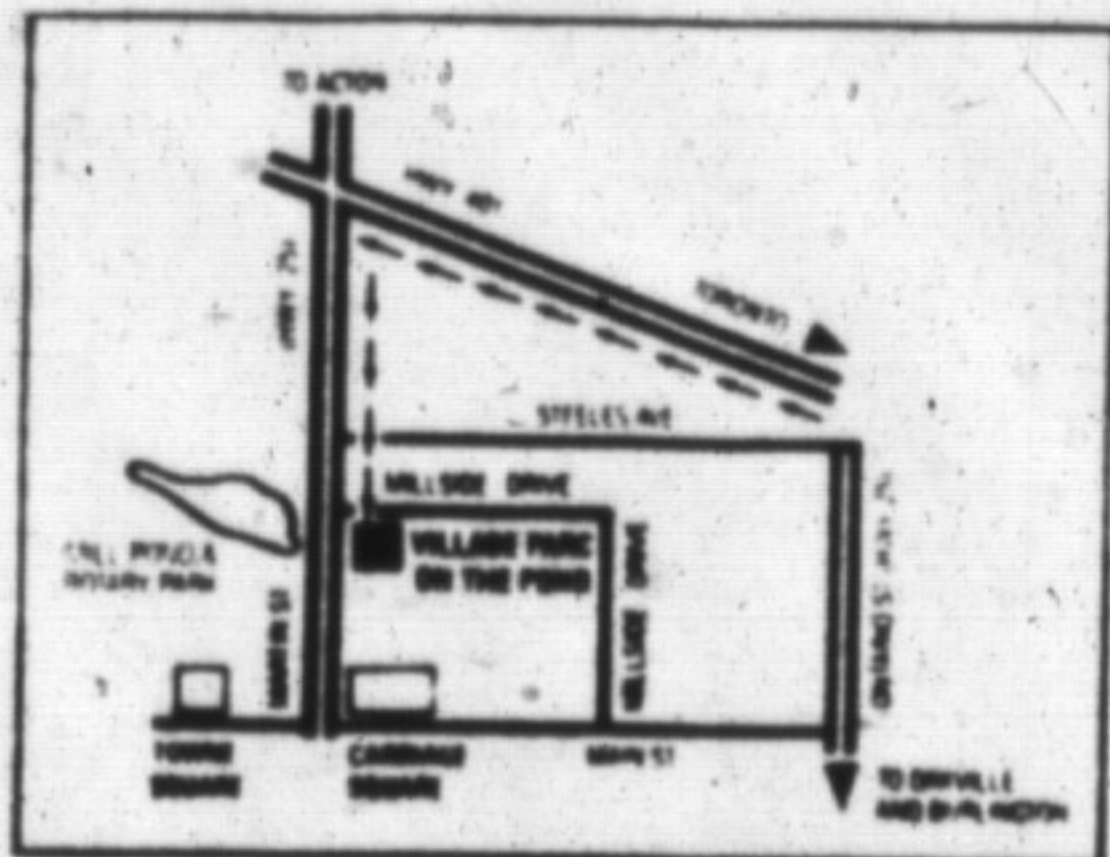
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