

Thirsty Kilbride residents earn victory at Region Committee blames area developers for loss of water at expense of long-time residents

By NORMAN NELSON

The co-chairman of a Kilbride citizens group that banded together to protect the community's fragile water supply from what it perceived as thirsty developers is pleased with Halton's region-wide response to its concerns.

"The changes are in complete favour of the Kilbride Water Committee," Eric Christensen told members of the Region's planning and public works committee Wednesday.

The Kilbride water committee was formed last year after local residents complained of problems with their well water — something they attributed to new development taking place that is ultimately projected to increase the community's population by almost 50 per cent.

'Major losses'

"We experienced some major losses of water that we feel are a result of the development in the Kilbride area," said Mr. Christensen.

"Some of these new homes going in are one and a half to two million dollars... with water running in the middle of a rainstorm because of their computerized irrigation systems to keep the four acres of grass lush and green."

But just down the road, he said long-time residents found they were suffering a complete lack of water.

Developers, he added, were being allowed to substantially profit by earning hundreds of thousands of dollars on the lots while "local residents were suffering and were in a position where they had to go out and buy water to sustain their homes."

It created quite a furor amongst the people in town.

The staff report, approved by the planning and public works committee and slated to go before full council next Wednesday, basically outlined a two-stage approach.

The first stage consists of several recommendations to be implemented immediately, and they include:

- Improved monitoring to ensure that properties with mediocre wells have installed a cistern.

- Owners of lots previously approved, but which have remained vacant, will again have to establish they have a regionally acceptable well before receiving a building permit.

- A developer must provide a regionally acceptable well on each lot prior to receiving final subdivision approval.

- A developer must test surrounding wells. Where it's determined that there will be an effect on neighbouring wells, it will be up to the developer "to come to some solution to the satisfaction of the affected property owner."

The second stage consists of a hydrogeological study to tackle some of the concerns that staff couldn't immediately respond to, such as a recommendation by the Kilbride Water Committee that in ground lawn irrigation systems be prohibited.

Irrigation wasteful?

Staff say they are not sure if in ground lawn irrigation is more wasteful than the normal sprinkler systems.

The community group also raised two other

points that staff wants to look into further:

- The establishment of a communal well system for some hamlets such as Kilbride, as has been done in neighbouring Hamilton Wentworth Region for Carlisle.

- Whether water usage in rural areas should be restricted through the use of a water restriction bylaw as is now the case for Halton's urban areas.

"Regional staff believe that these questions, and others, should be addressed by way of a comprehensive hydrogeological study for the entire Region," stated planning commissioner Rash Mohammed in his report.

For Milton councillor Bill Johnson, however, the staff report didn't go far enough, and he offered several more suggestions:

- That the health department take its own well water samples instead of relying on those provided by a well drilling company. Several wells, he said, have "gone sour."

- That retention ponds be required for rural subdivisions. Instead of water running off ultimately to Lake Ontario, he explained that retention ponds would capture the run-off, thereby helping to recharge underground water supplies.

- That open sewage lagoons, such as the one used by Mohawk Raceway, be prohibited.

Burlington councillor Barry Quinn, however, urged support for the report, stressing that councillor Johnson's concerns can be addressed in the hydrogeological study.

He added that staff had come up with the best possible safeguards given that much of the responsibility for groundwater falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Environment.

CRIME STOPPERS OF HALTON

Thieves grab \$50,000 worth of kids' clothes

A \$50,000 theft of children's clothing is being investigated in Milton.

Sometime overnight on June 19, an empty store in a strip mall at Ontario Street and Derry Road was entered by forcing the lock on the front door.

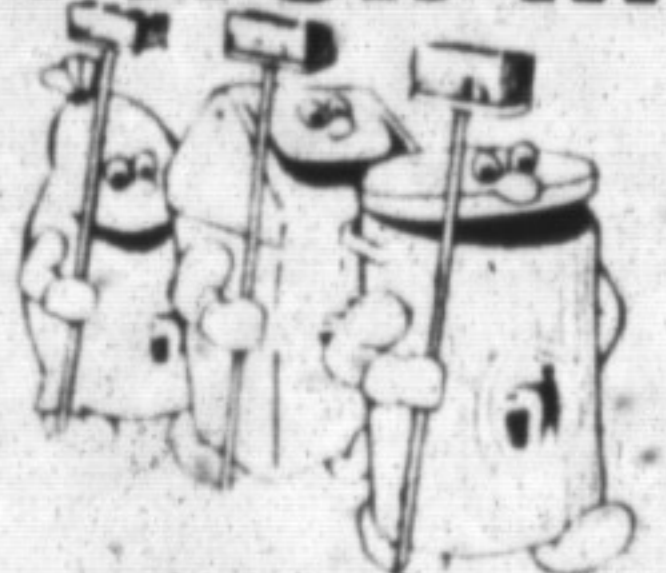
Once inside, a hole was punched in the inside wall which allowed entry into Genetics clothing store.

A large quantity of infant, children's, and

teen clothing was removed through the rear door of the store. Only name brands such as Osh Kosh, Ralph Lauren (Polo) and Esprit were taken. The majority of the articles were fall clothing.

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