

Johnson makes it official - he's quitting politics

Councillor Bill Johnson made it official Monday night, although it has been common knowledge in area political circles for some time - he's quitting politics.

The flamboyant and outspoken Halton regional and Milton councillor put his announcement on the public record at town council's general committee meeting.

Mr. Johnson said he made did so in hopes of sparking some interest among people considering running

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for office to replace him, and because constituents had been asking him whether or not rumours of his political retirement were true.

"I've had 12 happy and sometimes

controversial years," the Nas-sagaweya councillor said. Asked what he planned on doing to occupy his time, Mr. Johnson replied, tongue firmly in cheek; that he would "write for *The Champion*."

Councillor Rick Day quipped that Mr. Johnson "had a long and distinguished career and sometimes made it miserable for the rest of us."

Mr. Day added that he found it difficult to believe the determined rural councillor plans to retire. "We'll

believe it at the close of nominations" for the next term.

Hefty price

According to the old saying, "if you have to ask how much, you can't afford it."

But Milton councillors asked how much Monday night anyway, only to be told they will probably never be able to afford it.

The "it" in this case is all-around good roads throughout the sprawl-

ing 146-square mile municipality.

Every year an independent consultant produces a report on the state of Milton's roads and how much money would be needed to bring them all up to par.

This year, that consultant told town councillors \$80 million would do the trick.

Unfortunately, the Town only has about \$1.5 million for the task, public works director John Matthews pointed out.

Councillor Rick Day appeared both astounded and angered by the figure, noting that such a requirement "could never be met."

Councillor Day questioned the method of appraising road conditions, suggesting a flaw in the analysis somewhere in order to come up with such a sum.

But Mr. Matthews stuck to his guns, despite the fact Milton's road needs estimate has risen more than 115 per cent over last year.

"Basically our consultant is telling us our needs have increased more than the average municipality," Mr. Matthews said. The average increase has been in the order of "50 to 60" per cent, he pointed out.

Substantial cost increases are a big part of the mix, Mr. Matthews noted. Road building costs have risen recently from "\$1 million a kilometre to \$3 million a kilometre."

New road building costs are only factored into the equation once every five years and this was the year, Mr. Matthews added.

Sign of trouble

A proposed donut store will have to do some more homework with regard to their advertising signs before Milton town councillors will approve plans, elected officials decided Monday night.


But councillors also said the Town will have to do more work too.

Milton is in the process of writing a new sign bylaw which will limit the size of such business advertisements.


The signs tendered by Robin's Donuts, which is expected to open on Main Street, fell into a grey area.

Councillors asked for more information regarding the proposed new sign bylaw before making a decision.

Sign supplier Phil Theriault said Robin's Donuts has not yet agreed to a lease for the vacant property, and "depending on the (sign) bylaw, may not open at all."



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November 14th, 1990

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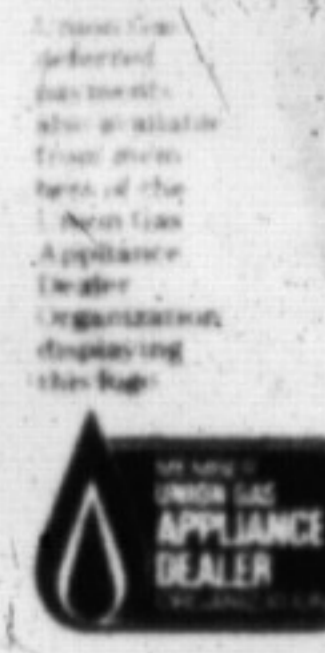
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