



# COMMENT

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Classified Advertising: 875-3300

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## Slipshod politics

The process confronting developers who wish to build what amounts to a flea market in Milton's industrial park has been confusing and contradictory, regardless of whether the project is an appropriate land use in the area.

Lawyer Howard Mott, who represents the people planning to erect a 200,000 square foot flea market in Milton's Highway 401 industrial park, appeared frustrated following last week's municipal council meeting, and we can understand why. For the second time, and despite some changes to his proposal, Mr. Mott had been denied council's approval for what he likes to call a "trade centre."

To be perfectly frank about it, like many councillors, we aren't especially pleased with the plan put forward by Milton St. Clair Lands, a consortium backing the \$4-million flea market venture.

But we do feel the municipality has put itself in a position that will prove at least embarrassing and awkward should the differences between the developers and council result in a legal showdown before the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). The Town is pressing forward with just such a confrontation.

The problem is, basically, simple. In a staff report prepared by Milton's acting planning director John Fior and dated May 22, the following quote appears: "... this proposal meets with the intent" of Milton's development policies.

That quote is contained in a brief forwarded to Milton's Committee of Adjustment, a subcommittee of council which deals with requests for minor zoning exemptions. In that same text, Mr. Fior asks that if the committee approves the request filed by Mr. Mott, some minor conditions be imposed.

The Committee of Adjustment ends up approving Mr. Mott's request and imposing the conditions Mr. Fior outlined. However, town council then decides to appeal the Committee of Adjustment decision, saying the group exceeded its authority. That's why Mr. Mott and Milton's lawyers appear headed for a battle at the OMB.

Now, council is within its rights to overturn recommendations made by staff members, such as Mr. Fior. And council is obviously senior in jurisdiction to its committee of adjustment, which is made up of citizen appointees chosen by council.

But this looks like a case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing.

The task of the planning department is supposed to be to ferret out any glitches in reasonable development proposals and resolve them, or at least provide options for their resolution, to council. Then it's up to elected officials to choose among those options.

That never happened with Mr. Mott's proposal. What happened was that planners had no substantive objections to the flea market and told the Committee of Adjustment so. The committee then did its job, using that data as part of its reasoning in approving Mr. Mott's submission. But council countermanded both its own staff and its committee after both had already pored over the matter in depth.

Why did councillors wait so long? Why have they embarrassed both staff and the Committee of Adjustment at the eleventh hour, when they all knew of the project well before that? Why did they let others spin their wheels when they had serious reservations about the development?

We don't particularly want a flea market in what's supposed to be a flagship industrial park, although it appears we may legally have little choice. And we understand the reservations of councillors who don't want it. But we think they should have acted more aggressively on the matter, sooner. It might have helped avoid needless aggravation — and expense.

## LOOKING BACK



The summer of 1983 looked a lot hotter than its 1992 counterpart is turning out to be. And the four lifeguards at Milton's new Rotary Park swimming pool were enjoying the balmy weather. From left are; supervisor Richard Randall, Kathy Hunter, Andy McTear and Gord Sullivan. Karen Overend sold pool tickets while Warren Charlton and Rose-Anne Wilson were the dressing room attendants.

## PAGES OF THE PAST

### One Year Ago

From the August 7, 1991 issue.

□ The Mohawk Festival Country Chili Cookoff for the United Way would see seasoned chili creators and novices alike competing for the bragging rights of Halton's best chili Saturday, Aug. 24. To add a touch of glamour to the competition Miss Canada, Leslie McLaren of Edmonton would be both opening the festivities at Mohawk Raceway, and presenting trophies and prizes to the winning teams. In addition to the Chili Cookoff, there would be live entertainment, an antique car parade and a demonstration by the Milton Fire Department aerial ladder brigade.

□ Supporters of Milton District Hospital were holding a dance — oldies-style — with live bands. The opening band was Barefoot, a young local band with the feature act being Class of '59, one of Canada's top nostalgia bands. A \$15 ticket for the dance also purchased an entry in a draw for the grand prize trip for two to Las Vegas, compliments of Bruce Hood Travel.

□ Brad Bevan from Queensland, Australia won the Teleglobe World Cup Triathlon at Kelso Conservation Area. He received \$25,000 for finishing the event in 50 minutes and 18 seconds. In the women's division Karen Smyers of Boston, Mass. earned her eighth straight victory. The race consisted of a 1.5-km swim, a 40-km cycling portion and a 10-km run. Top Milton finishers were Tina Braam, John Slickers, Gary Jones and Dave Jelley.

### 20 Years Ago.

From the August 9, 1972 issue

□ There was a happy ending to a five-hour search for three-year-old Tara McColeman of No. 5 Sideroad

Esquesing. Tara and her younger sister Laura had been playing in the backyard. When Laura came inside however, Tara stayed outside with her dog. She became lost when she ran over the crest of a ravine at the back of the lot to retrieve a ball she and her dog had been playing with. She was found at 1 a.m. by Tom Neill of Fourth Line sound asleep in a shed behind his home with her dog Cindy protecting her.

□ Halton's 1972 Dairy Princess Karen Marshall of Milton learned that she would be competing in the Ontario Dairy Princess Competition at the Canadian National Exhibition. About 40 princesses from across Ontario would be competing for the title. The competition included an interview, speeches and a milking contest.

□ The Annual Convention of the Firefighters Association in Mount Forest had to be cut short because of heavy rainfall. Milton's force, however made a good showing. The Ladies' Auxiliary captured second prize in a water ball game contest and the men of the brigade came in third for the George Weaver trophy for the best appearing group on parade.

### 50 Years Ago

From the August 6, 1942 issue

□ A unique cup and saucer show was held at the home of Mrs. Alex Moore in Campbellville in honor of Miss Anna McPhail.

□ The local bowling green was the scene of a men's doubles tournament on the Civic holiday. Visitors came from Brampton, Guelph, Acton and Oakville. George Dawson and James Blaine of Milton won third prize in the event. First and second went to teams from Brampton and Acton.

□ The Court House in Milton was being treated to a fresh coat of paint.

## PUD

BY STEVE NEASE

