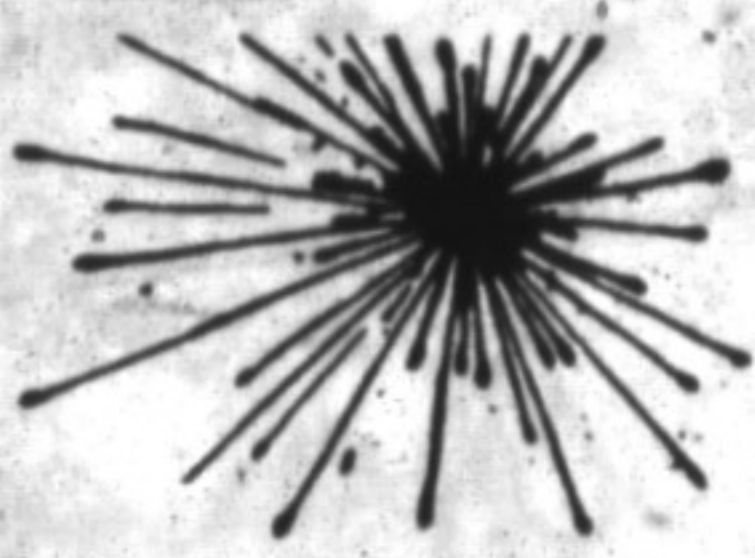




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Grier says growth managers won't add to government

By ROB KELLY
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seeing plans to manage massive anticipated growth in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) won't become another layer of government, Environment Minister Ruth Grier told Halton politicians last week.

There has been an undertow of concern among Halton regional councillors that the Office for the Greater Toronto Area (OGTA) will usurp many of the responsibilities now controlled by the five regional-type governments that make up the GTA — Halton, Peel, York, Durham and Metro Toronto.

"Is the Office of the Greater Toronto Area the beginning of a fourth level of government? Not in my opinion," Ms Grier told an audience of approximately 100 at Halton Region's administration centre in Oakville last Friday.

"I do not see it as taking over the role of the municipalities," Ms Grier added, but instead acting as an agency "that can pull people together."

"There are those who say perhaps we have too much government and I

don't disagree with that," Ms Grier said. "But I think we have enormous problems and I think it's critical we begin to move forward to resolve them."

As far as reducing the overall size of government, that process would probably break down into bickering and "I don't think we can afford the time to do that," she said.

By 2021, more than 6 million people will call the GTA home, according to current estimates. At present the population is approximately 4.2 million. To cope, billions of dollars will be poured into infrastructure — roads, utilities, schools, housing and all the other amenities that make up a modern municipality.

The problem is, "none of us have any money, I don't have to tell you that," Ms Grier told the municipal leaders. "Ontario is no longer the economic generator it was. We can no longer afford to subsidize other regions of the country."

On the local scene, in the last year, the provincial and municipal GTA governments invested \$2.3 billion in infrastructure, Ms Grier noted. However, she is "not confident" all the funding decisions made with that money "have been done in as integrated a way as they might have been."

At the provincial level, "one sees one ministry doing something that may not complement the plan of another ministry."

She said politicians, as well as bureaucrats, hold a share of the blame for delaying or duplicating

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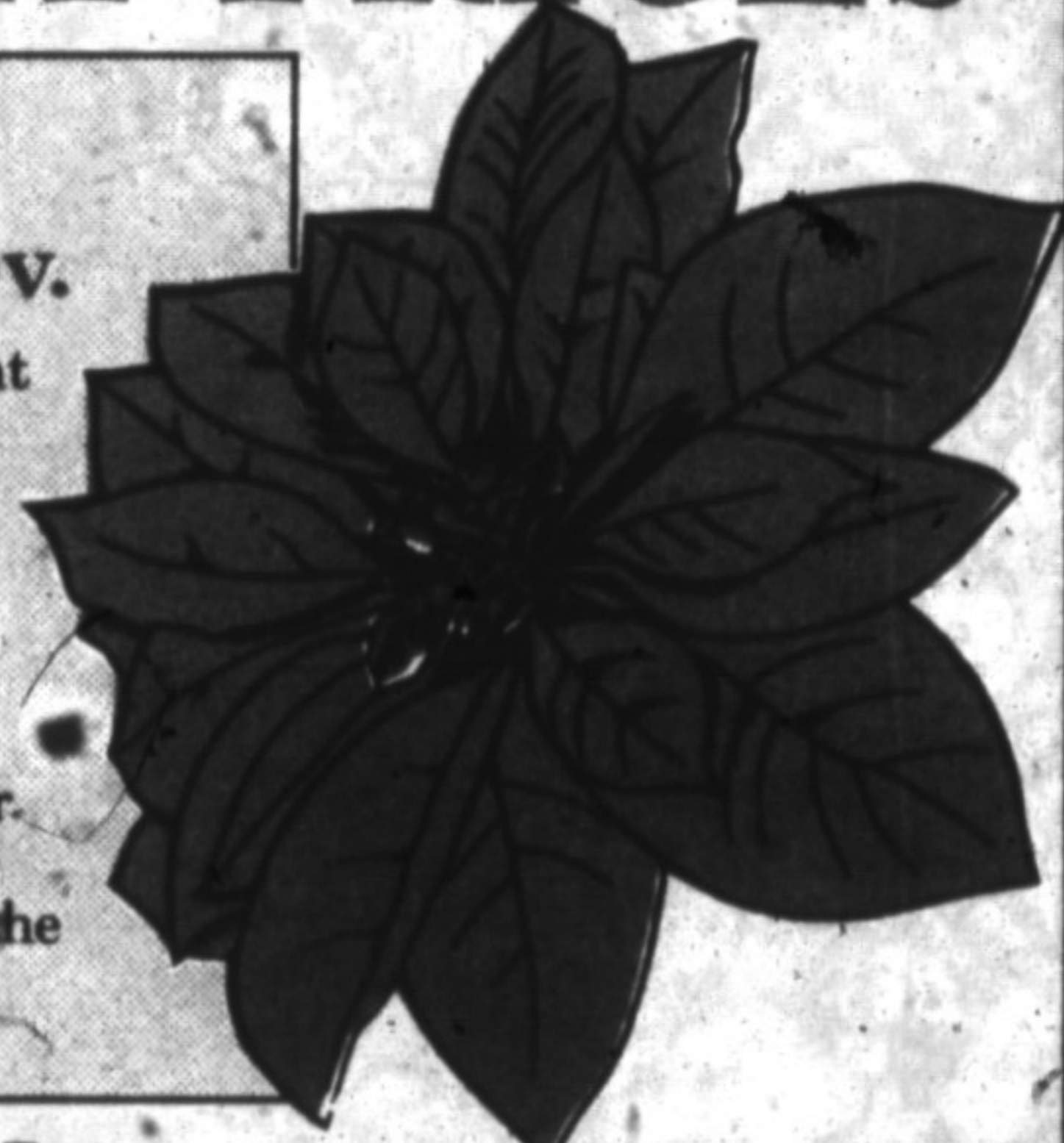


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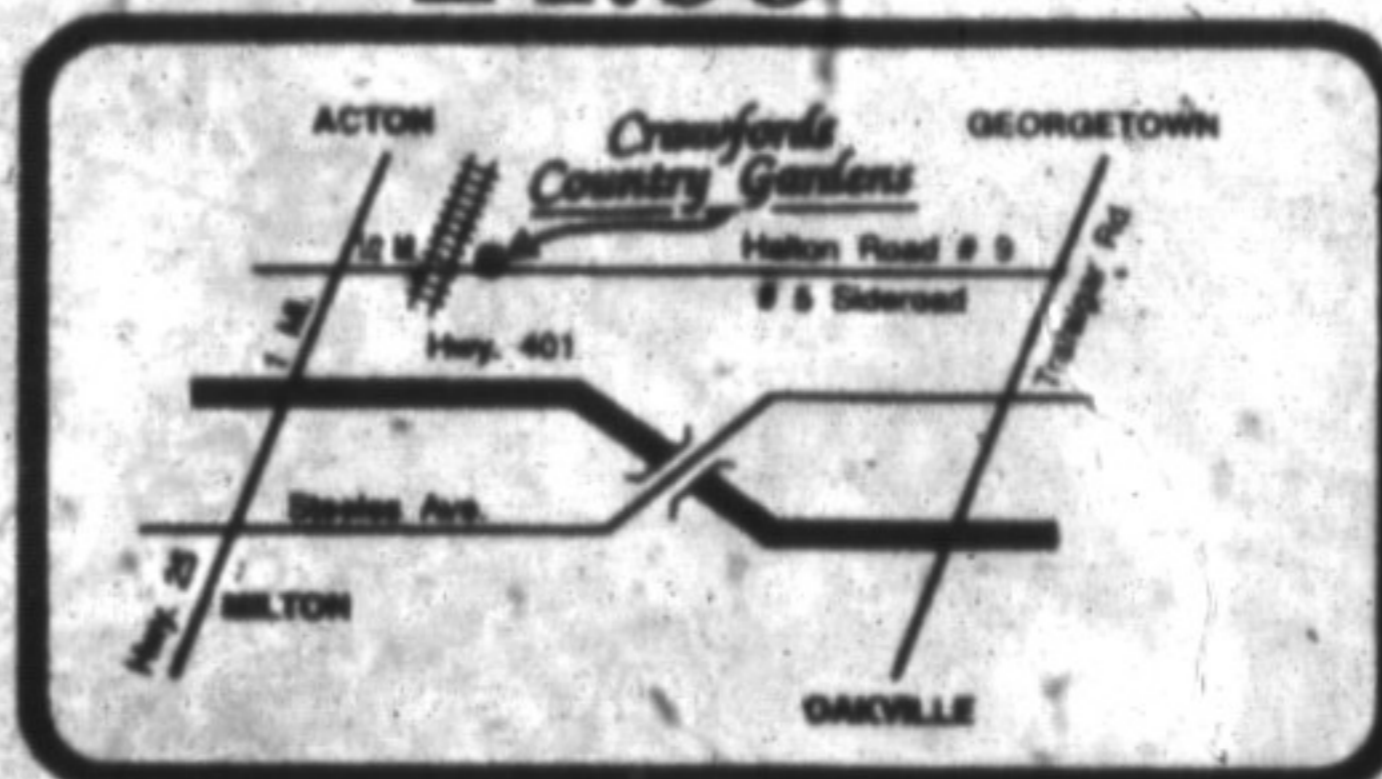
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876-1133
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Sales Rep in attendance
ROYAL LEPAGE REAL ESTATE SERVICES INC.
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- SUNDAY 2-4 PM**
116 Robinwood Crescent
\$189,900.
Sales Rep in attendance
ROYAL LEPAGE REAL ESTATE SERVICES INC.
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235 Bronte Rd. S. #37
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