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HOURS:

## Halton overrides Milton council to approve rural subdivision

By ROB KELLY The Champion

Halton Region is taking the side of a developer who wants to build a 15-home estate subdivision in northern rural Milton, despite the fact town council opposes the idea.

Milton regional councillor Barry Lee, who sits on the Halton planning and public works committee at which the matter was aired last week, urged regional staff to be sensitive to Milton council's priorities, even though the two bodies are at odds.

Wednesday regional planning urged regional staff Milton's denial to the Ontario Municipal Board, which decides policy in such a clash. Mr. Mohammed took the step, after examining a request from developer Gary Robertson, because he believes council erred.

Initially, in 1990, Milton council supported Mr. Robertson's application to build the collection of upscale houses on Fifth Line near 20 Sideroad. But by 1992, council was swinging away from granting permission to build such estate subdivisions in rural areas, and had begun exploring new land use planning policies that would curb them.

However, Milton's newer planning guidelines had yet to be adopted by Halton Region, and in any event,

say regional planners, those guidelines can't be retroactive to 1990.

Even Mr. Lee found himself having to eventually vote in support seemed legally valid, although he obviously wasn't keen on the idea.

Mr. Lee said Milton council "emphatically" feels the project flaunts local planning policies. It's a source of frustration for local councillors when regional government overturns their decisions, he added. "This happens time and time again. We have a dilemma. I really have problems with the process." Mr. Lee commissioner Rash Mohammed ob-"sensitive" to Milton's wishes even at the OMB.

> **Burlington councillor Bob Brechin** asked why, if the proposal dovetails with planning policies, Milton council rejected it. He wanted to know if it was for "political reasons."

"It's very hard for me to answer that question," Mr. Mohammed said.

Mr. Lee then asked the planners to detail the thrust of development strategies in the rural areas. Pat Murphy, Halton's development dirof the Region's position, because it ector, said Milton's wish to make it tougher for rural estate building to take place fits in with Halton's latest push, but documents to that effect haven't been formally approved, and in any case Mr. Robertson would beat the new rules by showing he applied before they were in effect.

Mr. Lee said such projects are "slipping through the cracks for technical reasons."

Milton town council is of the opinion "that at this time the brakes should be put on" rural subdivision tained committee approval to appeal though they will argue the other side building "for a whole array of reasons," Mr. Lee said.

> Milton is known to have environmental concerns, particularly with regard to water, surrounding rural estate subdivisions. Town officials also worry about hodge-podge development all over the rural area without any real master plan.

## Two-car crash being investigated

A Volkswagen making a left turn on Fifth Line collided with a car travell-

ing east on No. 5 Sideroad Sunday night.

The 1984 Mercury was approaching Fifth Line when the accident occurred at 8:45 p.m. Three people were in the Volkswagen and two people occupied the Mercury, Halton police said. The Milton Fire Department was called to the scene to help rescue trapped occupants.

Three people were taken to hospital with injuries described as not lifethreatening. The accident is still under investigation.



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