

Scholten pushing for Halton to move on sex scandal

Says Region has an obligation to tell the 35 spouses of their husbands' activity

By SAL BOMMARITO
The Champion

Burlington regional councillor Ralph Scholten says Halton has an obligation to inform the spouses of those charged in connection with al-

leged homosexual activity at Shell Park.

To that end, Mr. Scholten succeeded in convincing regional council last week to ask its legal department for a report on "the legality and advisability" of having Halton's

health department notify the wives of the 46 men charged.

One of the men, who later committed suicide, had AIDS. Police said 35 of those men arrested are married.

Recently the region's medical officer of health, Dr. Bob Nosal, said by law Halton could only notify the dead man's partner, but had no legal authority to contact the spouses of the other men.

Mr. Scholten maintains that because the names haven't been published in the press, Halton has an obligation to let the spouses know their health could be at risk.

"Dr. Nosal has said his hands are tied, but that doesn't alleviate the community's concerns," Mr. Scholten said.

Oakville regional councillor Kevin Flynn, however, felt Mr. Scholten had overstated his case.

"I don't want to heighten the fear to the public more than it's been heightened. We have a process in place and we've been following that process."

"The names of those people who have been charged are public knowledge. You can get (the information) at the police station. (Mr. Scholten) can call anybody he wants to tell them those names."

"No one is going to argue this isn't a high-risk activity. Those charged should be taking an AIDS test."

"Not only those charged, but those who may have been participating, but weren't charged. (But) the issue of notification could open up a whole can of worms," Mr. Flynn said.

Mr. Scholten became visibly upset when regional chairman Peter Pomeroy suggested he come back

with a formal motion to the health and social services committee, which meets next Tuesday (Aug. 31).

"The next meeting is at the end of the month. We're dealing with a disease here," Mr. Scholten objected.

Mr. Pomeroy asked acting legal services commissioner Rebecca Bentham, "can you see any reason to bring a report back to a special meeting of regional council?"

"Whether or not time is of the essence is for (Dr. Nosal) to respond to, not for me," Ms Bentham replied. She could, however, address the question of council's legal liability if it takes Mr. Scholten's proposed course, she said.

Ms Bentham was directed to report directly back to Mr. Scholten before bringing her presentation to the next health and social services committee meeting.

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Town investigates rural businesses

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what municipal officials consider the illegal dumpsite. The town is going to court in September in an effort to block Mr. Cummins from accepting any more construction fill.

"I think our name just happened to come up" during the town's investigation, Mr. Course said.

"We have no problems with any of the neighbors. We haven't been complaining about anyone," said Patrick Cummins, a lawyer who is representing his father in the court case.

"It's up to the town to decide if the businesses are contravening any bylaw. We maintain we're not and we're not complaining about them. There has been no formal complaint, either verbal or in writing to the town from us," Mr. Cummins stressed.

Wayne Ferguson, owner of Grasshoppers Landscaping Services on Eighth Line, said he has operated the company from his property since 1981 without any

problems. "I don't think there's any need to get excited. I'm not interested in stirring up a hornet's nest," Mr. Ferguson said.

He said he met with a town bylaw enforcement officer, who informed him that his firm also doesn't conform to the area agricultural zoning. Mr. Ferguson said he is waiting to hear from the town what his next step should be.

"I don't think it's a problem of operating a business here. It's a rezoning," he said.

When asked if the zoning problem was an isolated instance, Mr. DeVries replied, "the mandate of the bylaw officer is to respond to complaints. The town doesn't have sufficient (bylaw enforcement) staff to see if the problem exists throughout the municipality. I'm sure it does, but they're usually reacting to complaints."

A third company affected is a deck and fencing firm on Lower Base Line. The owner was unavailable for comment at press time.

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