

MVA matter drags on

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to region-wide MVA based on 1988 property values, which would result in a \$4-million-plus tax shift to Oakville from Burlington.

The council vote came after more than five hours of deliberation and debate in front of a jam-packed meeting, but not before some old wounds between Burlington and Oakville regional councillors on the issue had been reopened.

Despite assurances from Mr. Mulkewich that the deferral was meant "in a spirit of compromise," some Oakville councillors said the move showed a lack of trust on the part of their Burlington colleagues.

"The reason why this cannot flow tonight has little to do with procedure and a lot to do with trust," said an obviously angry and frustrated Oakville Mayor Ann Mulvale.

"We could finish this situation tonight if we were a region and if we weren't parochial or... hiding behind procedure," she said, in pointed reference to Mr. Mulkewich.

At one point in the proceedings, regional chairman Peter Pomeroy called a recess to give councillors the opportunity to deliberate quietly in their respective camps.

During the break, councillors came

to the realization they had no alternative but to go along with the deferral, since they didn't have the support of two thirds of council — 16 out of 24 votes including one from Burlington — needed to reconsider implementation of 1988-based MVA.

"I feel like I have a gun to my head," said Halton Hills councillor Rick Bonnette, who added he was in favor of passing the committee's recommendations, rather than the deferral.

"It's a bit of a game, but if we don't play all of the citizens of Halton will lose. I'm not prepared to take that risk. Very reluctantly, I will support (the deferral)," he said.

Burlington councillors took strong exception to Mr. Bonnette's comments.

"I hope there are no more comments about guns being to heads," said Burlington's Joyce Savoline. "Burlington is looking for a compromise also. The only part that's different is that it's tied to the uncertainty of provincial approval."

Mr. Pomeroy said he and the mayors of the four municipalities will meet with the ministers to ensure the province adopts the compromise.

Sex assault trial date set

A November 9 trial has been scheduled for a Milton man charged in connection with a July 11 attack on a 52-year-old woman.

The woman told police she was beaten and sexually assaulted by a male acquaintance at her Main Street East apartment during the early morning hours. She was taken to hospital with cuts requiring stitches and severe bruising.

William McMahon, 43, of Main Street East is charged with assault, sexual assault and forcible confinement. He remains in custody.

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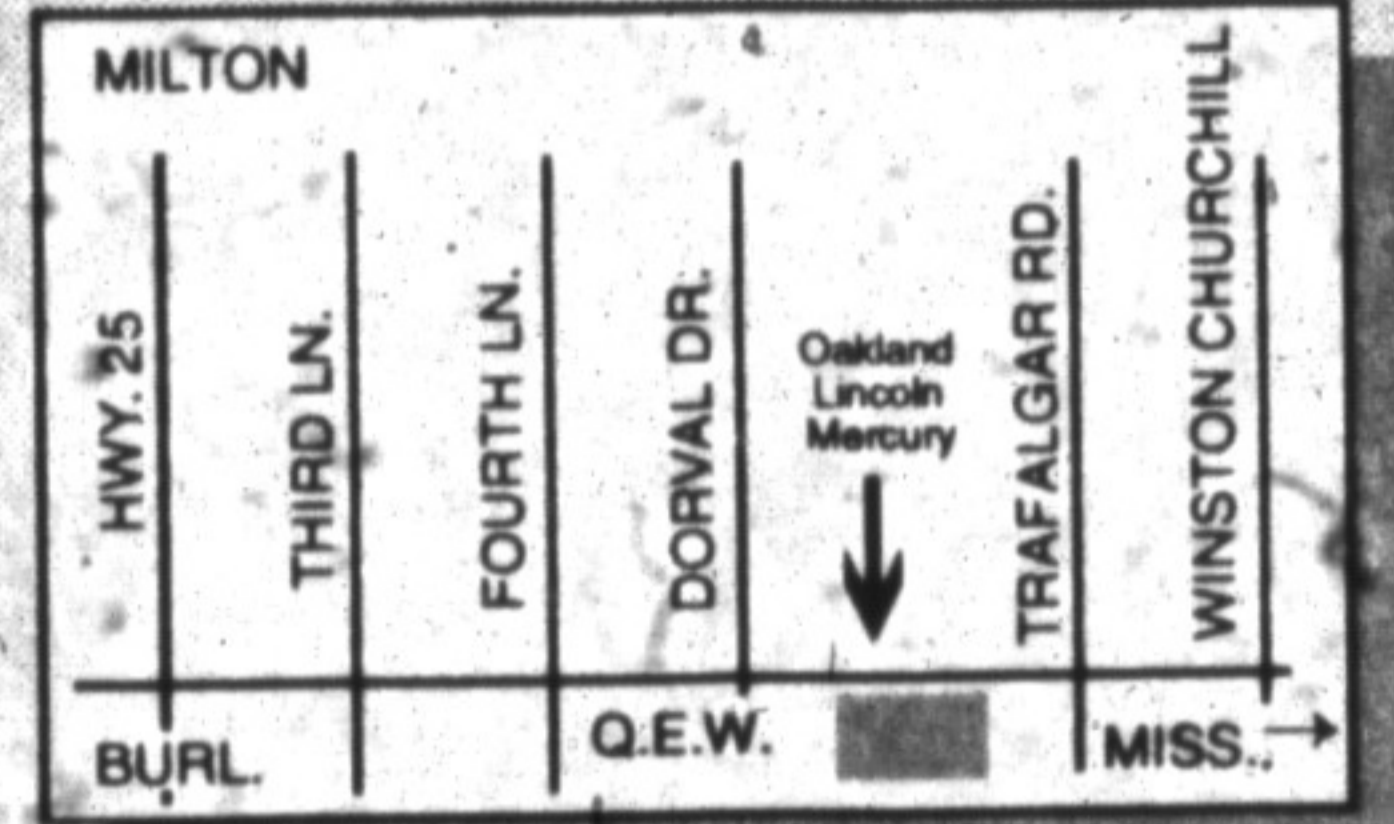
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