

Speck-tacular

Linda Price of J. Michael's Optical on Main Street shows off some of the latest in Giorgio Armani Frames. They were all part of the optical store's recent frame show.

Photo by
Graham Paine



Scholten still touting all Halton as one city

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

Shed a tier for Halton. Burlington regional Councillor Ralph Scholten says he will continue to push his concept for a single-tier City of Halton government, but Milton council wants nothing to do with the idea.

Mr. Scholten recently requested Halton regional staff analyze the financial impacts on property taxes under a one-tier local government plan. A similar study showed much higher taxes would occur in Halton under a Greater Toronto Area (GTA) con-

cept involving a link with Toronto, and seems to have helped derail that idea.

However, Milton town council passed a resolution refusing to allow town staff to participate in studying a City of Halton, calling the proposal contrary to Milton's previously stated position on municipal reform.

"From the presentations I heard at the (provincial GTA panel) meeting last week I think the four municipalities have four separate and distinct agendas," Mayor Gord Krantz said. "However, there are some points of agreement."

Councillor Gerry Brooks suggested Milton participate if only to have access to the information that comes out of the study.

In an interview, Mr. Scholten said he needs the figures "to put meat to the skeleton" of his idea.

He said he will not drop the concept of a City of Halton and will have to persuade the citizens of Halton and provincial government officials that his plan is the reasonable course of action. He has largely given up on convincing local councils, calling them "far too parochial."

He still hopes to sway individual councillors, and added he'll write to Ontario Premier Mike Harris and Minister of Municipal Affairs Al Leach to outline the plan. "I have a selling job to do," said Mr. Scholten. "I'd like to have local councils on side but I might as well take a stick to a hornets nest."

Mr. Scholten said individual municipalities would not lose their local flavour in a single municipality. He pointed to Bronte, Aldershot and Campbellville as areas which no longer have their own governments but which remain unique.

The City of Halton idea is the only proposal which fulfills all the requirements of municipal reform as set out by the provincial government, according to Mr. Scholten. With only one elected body instead of the current five, a City of Halton would reduce politicians and bureaucracy, be cheaper, more understandable, increase efficiencies and be more accountable to residents, he contends.

"GTA is a dragon that's been slain," said Mr. Scholten. "It's bleeding from a fatal wound. The suburban areas have been stabbing away at it and now even Metro Toronto has said they can't support it."

Likewise the idea of a Greater Bay Area, with parts of Halton (Burlington) joining Hamilton-Wentworth is dead because of the added taxation which Halton residents would be forced to pay, Mr. Scholten said. The increases were not as steep as those under the GTA proposals, however they were significant, in the range of \$150 to \$320 for a house with an assessed value of \$250,000.

Mr. Scholten doesn't think a non-taxing utility is going to fly because it doesn't go far enough in reducing and streamlining government and has no accountability.

The idea has found favour with Burlington council and other regional representatives have expressed an interest. Mr. Scholten called the proposed utility board, like present boards and commissions, the best way to keep costs high because of their limited accountability to the public. He even suggested some politicians like the idea of creating a utility board because then they can blame it when costs rise.

Mr. Scholten called his plan "an evolution we all could live with," and suggested Halton take charge of the situation, rather than waiting for the provincial government to impose changes.

THINK WARM



SPA SHOWROOM CLEARANCE

- 6 Adjustable Spa Jets • Top Load Pressure Filter
- Ozone Footwell Jet • Free Standing Base
- 2 Dual Silent Air Controls
- Full Foam Insulation
- Full Cedar Cabinet
- Hardcover • Spa Moodlight

2 Available



Free Join Us For Our 15th Annual
POOL OPENING SEMINAR
Thursday April 18th R.S.V.P. 878-7087

An informative evening on pool opening procedures and water care.

HALTON POOLS N' SPAS

"Over 20 Years of Dedicated Professional Service"

845 Main Street E., Milton (across from the GO station)

878-7087

