

# Halton Region looks south to open a new seniors' residence

By BRAD REAUME  
The Champion

Halton Region will move quickly to open a 100-bed senior care facility in Burlington or Oakville.

If additional provincially-funded beds are not found to accommodate the development, 100 beds and the associated provincial funding currently at Allendale's Martin House will be transferred. Halton wants a private company as a partner in the project.

Regional officials will scour the province trying to find municipalities willing to hand over unused long-term-care beds. Each bed represents necessary provincial funding used to operate long-term-care facilities.

Halton is seeking enough beds to provide funding for an eight-bed facility at Georgetown District Hospital, a 50-bed addition to Martin House through renovation, and replacement of 100 beds, which will be transferred from Martin House to the proposed new 100-bed facility in south Halton.

At a recent regional meeting, Burlington Councillor Jack Dennison argued that Martin House should not be closed, but expanded by 50 beds because of low costs associated with running the facility.

"It makes no sense to relocate beds to the south of Halton when Martin House is so cost effective," Mr. Dennison said. "We should fill the unused 50-bed capacity at Martin House first, then pursue beds for southern Halton. Removing beds from Martin House is just increasing our own inefficiencies."

However at council, Oakville Mayor Anne Mulvale and Burlington Mayor Walter Mulkeewich made it clear that cost was not the top concern. They cited the difficulty people from south Halton find in visiting seniors at the Milton facility.

"Twice we've said we should put beds where the need is," said Mayor Mulkeewich, referring to a previous report. "People are in the south. People in Burlington and Oakville need to have beds where their families are."

The mayor referred to the 1989 plan for long term care, of which the construction of Allendale was the first phase, saying the plan called for 100 beds to move south.

But Milton Councillor Colin Best warned that "the world has changed since 1989. We have to keep costs down."

Social services commissioner Bonnie Ewart said at least \$3 million would be required to renovate Martin House to meet provincial standards. In addition, she wondered where the current 100 residents would be housed while renovations were being done.

## Gordon Food Service

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"It's difficult to get a location as attractive as this one," the director of operations said.

At the same time, the area isn't congested, which also made the location ideal, Mr. Scale added.

He said the company is pleased to be nominated for the award, adding that "it's always nice to be recognized."

Also nominated for 1995 Civic Improvement of the Year are the Millside Restaurant and the Milton Horticultural Society.

The award winner will be announced during a gala evening at Halton Hills Place tomorrow (Saturday) night.

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