

Homeowners wary of development

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

Residents of Milton's Scotch Block area came out in force at a public meeting on the municipal official plan at Bishop Reding High School recently.

"We don't want to be a wart on the butt of Milton but rather a jewel in its crown," said Nick de Jong, who spoke as a representative of area residents.

Scotch Block, which is south of Five Side Road and east of Highway 25, is an area of homes and agriculture. Plans call for James Snow Parkway to swing north-west through the southern part of the area and hook up with Highway 25. Lands

flanking the roadway would be zoned industrial.

Mr. de Jong said as many as 80 per cent of residents want Scotch Block to remain as it is now. However, recognizing they cannot stop progress, they were willing to compromise and allow increased residential development in the area, if a berm with trees was constructed on the northern boundary of the industrial lands to serve as a barrier.

"We don't want to fight the tide but we want to maintain the rural character of the area," said Mr. de Jong, who suggested the berm be 20 feet (six meters) high and in place prior to industrial construction. "The last thing the town needs is some good

land for industrial development and then unhappy people talking about it."

Other residents, such as Jaci Stevens, told council they want the area to be considered part of urban Milton, with the accompanying services.

Mel Iovio, Milton's director of planning, said all concerns raised at the meeting would be given careful scrutiny. It is likely, given the opposing views of area residents, Scotch Block will be studied at some length.

The official plan will come before council for approval later this summer, with planning department recommendations on issues raised at the public meeting.

From chamber

Reding student earns Larry Spencer award

A Bishop Reding Secondary School student was the year's first recipient of the Larry Spencer Memorial Award.

Neil Bagley, who recently graduated from high school, received the \$500 award presented annually to a student from each of Milton's three secondary schools.

The award was established by the Milton Chamber of Commerce as a community-

based venture aimed at recognizing accomplishments of graduating students.

The Chamber of Commerce raises funds for the award through its Tuition Cafe at the Milton Downtown Farmers' Market.

The award was created in memory of the late Larry Spencer in recognition of his contribution to the community and his particular concern for the future of youth.

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Vandalism plagues the area mosque

By TIM WHITNELL
Special to The Champion

The political head of Halton region's Moslem community says he simply wants justice done and the worrying to cease, in the wake of recent vandalism at the Halton Mosque.

"It's a police thing. It's not to do with any vengeance," said Syed Moin, president of the Halton Islamic Association, moments after a press conference held at the Fairview Street mosque in Burlington last Friday. The public meeting allowed the Moslem community to air concerns about their place of worship being targeted by vandals, who scrawled graffiti, as well as throwing both rocks and eggs.

"The people making the trouble, if they want to come in and talk to us, no problem," said Mr. Moin, an engineer with the federal government.

Mr. Moin was flanked by Burlington Mayor Walter Mulkevic and Burlington MP Paddy Torsney at the gathering.

Built in 1990, the Halton Mosque recently withstood a second wave of damage. Stones were hurled at parked vehicles within the mosque's compound. The spray painting of racist slogans such as "KKK Forever", and having eggs thrown against windows unnerved the 300 or so Moslem families in Halton who pray at the mosque. Fortunately, no one has been injured.

The recent rampage occurred over six weekends from April to late June, usually between 10-11 p.m., during the final of five daily prayer services.

The local Moslem community had enjoyed more than five years of serenity since the initial rash of vandalism during the building's construction in 1990. All of the mosque's windows were shattered at least once at the time.

Mr. Moin said he saddened by the siege mentality that has come out of the vandalism. A wrought iron fence and chain link fencing were erected in 1990. Mr. Moin said better outdoor lighting and the use of surveillance cameras have been discussed.

However, Mr. Moin and other Moslems at the conference stressed it's not so much the damage — insurance has covered some of the losses — that concerns them as the occasional disruption of their services and the lack of respect being shown to them.

"For our kids, they have grown up with it," Saeed Choudhary said of the mosque. "It's just like a second home. It's hard for them to see this."

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