

Filter testing could mean new construction in town

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

Recent provincial approval of a sewage treatment experiment could result in 650 homes being built in Milton.

Objections to a tax attached to a water filtration experiment were withdrawn and Municipal Affairs Minister Al Leach has approved a deal, which will allow Zenon Environmental to test its water filtration technology at the Milton water treatment plant. The test is slated for one year.

If the Ministry of Environment and Energy approves the filtration technology after that, it would effectively allow for 650 new local homes or their equivalent in industrial-commercial building.

"As far as I understand Zenon is already moving to get their equipment into place," said Milton Mayor Gord Krantz. "There are skeptics but the technology is used worldwide and it has the support of (Halton) Region and the province."

Zenon Environmental is a Burlington firm which markets its water filtration technology globally. The company is so confident of its ability to increase the capacity of the Milton treatment plant that management has financed nearly \$2 million in up-front costs, which Halton has agreed to repay if the test is successful.

The costs are to be recouped through a special development charge paid by land-owners who build the new homes or offices. "Without objections it could have been done several months ago," said Mr. Krantz, frustrated with 12 years of battling for increased development room. "We are

moving ahead with municipal blinding speed."

Preference for development is being given to those with land in the current urban envelope of Milton. The largest piece of undeveloped land in the envelope is a 27-acre parcel at the corner of Main Street and Thompson Road. Other than that, most developments would be infilling here and there, and likely not exceed a few lots at a time, according to Mr. Krantz. He said developers outside the urban envelope, holding lands due to be developed under the Halton Urban Structure Plan, "would take it all in a moment if they could get it."

Halton has so far prohibited those land-owners from accessing the water due to what the region characterizes as a lengthy and costly administrative job of legally readying the lands for development.

Mr. Krantz said developers could be waiting for anticipated legislative changes to the development charges act, expected soon, before plotting their corporate course for the near future.

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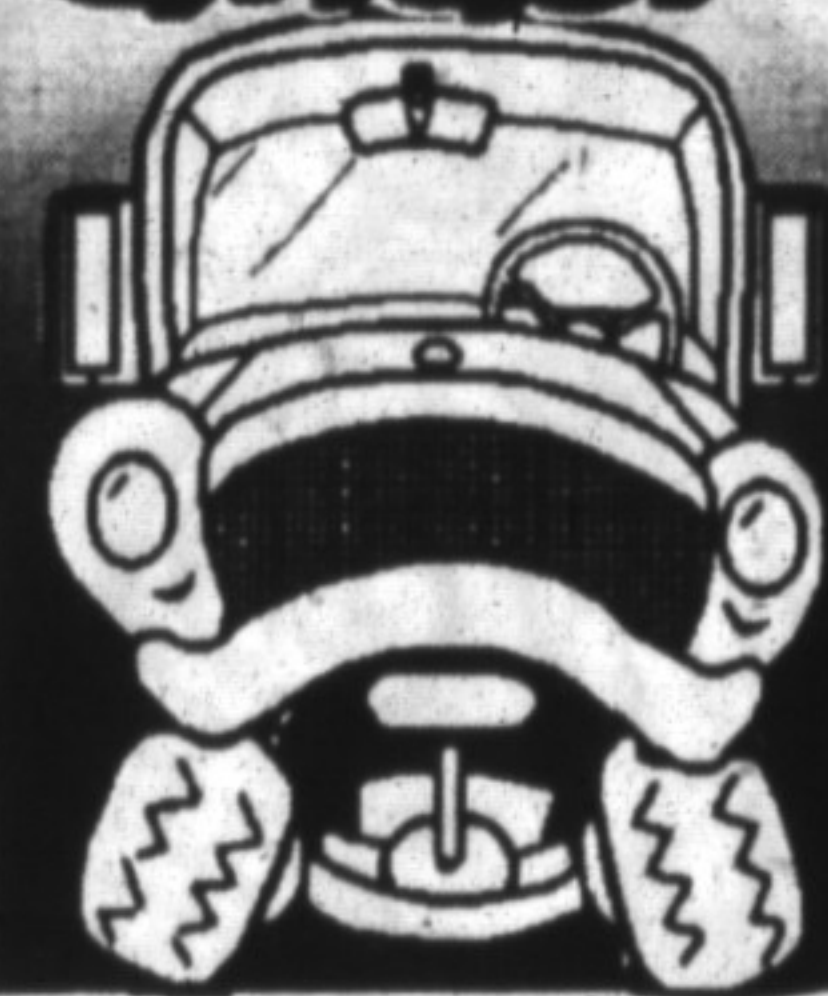
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