

Candidates square off at Ward 3 meeting

By Melanie Hennessey
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

The future of rural Milton was up for debate last week when mayoral, regional chair, council and public school board hopefuls gathered for an all-candidates meeting.

The session, hosted at Mohawk Racetrack October 15, drew a large crowd of predominately rural Miltonians seeking answers on everything from controlling the tax rate to making Internet speeds faster in Ward 3, which encompasses the countryside from Derry Road in the south to Hwy. 7 in the north.

The questions were directed at an expansive panel of 11 candidates. Halton regional chair candidate John Paulic and Wards 2, 3, 4, 5 local and regional councillor candidate Kulwant Deol were absent.

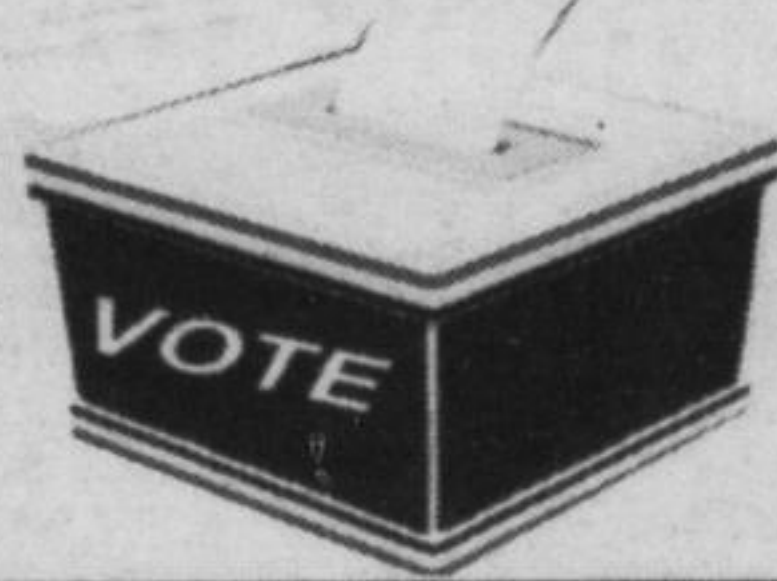
While each candidate brought different perspectives, many agreed that protecting the rural area is of utmost importance and shared similar ideas when asked about their vision of Nassagaweya over the next 20 years.

"Nassagaweya is a jewel of this area and should be left as it is," said mayoral candidate Stan Lazarski, indicating future development should be focused on south and east Milton. Mayoral candidate Gord Krantz pointed out that the rural area will continue to face challenges, such as Niagara Escarpment Commission restrictions and gravel pit proposals.

"We need to make sure the lifestyle here doesn't change that much, and I don't think it will," he said.

Ward 3 councillor candidate Cindy Lunau said her vision for the future of rural Milton is "more of the same and better of the same,"

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with residents shopping locally and being able to operate successful home-based businesses.

Wards 2, 3, 4, 5 local and regional councillor candidate Colin Best echoed those sentiments, also calling for the protection of viable agricultural operations in the face of massive growth throughout the region.

"We have to preserve the rural way of life, but also make it better," he said.

The trustee candidates weighed in on the topic as it relates to Milton's rural school, Brookville Public School.

Wards 2, 3, 4, 5 public school board trustee candidate Donna Danielli said she wants to see the facility maintained and renewal dollars invested to bring Brookville up to speed with the new schools that are now being built in Milton. "I want to make sure rural schools don't get left behind," she said.

Danielli's challenger, Asad Naqvi, said he would also like to see updated amenities at Brookville School, adding that Nassagaweya should be "left as it is" in the years to come.

Taxes were another hot topic of the night, with some candidates calling for lower taxes, while others said the local rates are already low by comparison to neighbouring municipalities.

"The taxes in Milton are really not that...14

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