

Letters

Platt proposes response to planned commercial development-expansion

Dear Editor

The proposed expansion of the commercial development on Highway 27 presents serious problems to the Town of Midland which Council should move to address without delay.

We are confronted with a problem by no means uncommon in Ontario, where urban type commercial development locates on a major highway outside the boundaries of an urban municipality, to take advantage of the market which that municipality provides and of the lower costs of unserviced land in a rural township which provides few major municipal services.

The almost universal experience has been that this type of strip commercial development attracts shoppers away from the Downtown Cores of neighbouring municipalities, which as a result deteriorate and decay, with a demoralizing effect on the entire community and substantial losses in revenue from business assessment.

Council must, I believe, recognize that this problem has two separate components which require separate approaches. The first problem is the competitive challenge to the Downtown Core.

Legion at work

Dear Editor:

Once again the Legion played Santa Claus to the children, residents of nursing homes and veterans in nursing homes and at the Mental Health Centre.

Approximately 100 children and parents enjoyed popcorn and coke while watching cartoons at the Pen 2 Theatre last Sunday.

Two hundred and fifty bags of goodies were distributed to the Georgian Manor, Huronia and Beechwood Nursing Homes.

Santa along with his clown musicians and helpers visited each resident in the Georgian Manor to wish them a Merry Christmas.

A total of 32 gifts consisting of fruit baskets, cigarettes, candy and cheese trays were distributed to veterans in the Nursing Homes and Mental Health Centre who will be hospitalized during the holiday season.

In response to the Salvation Army appeal for the needy, the Legion and Ladies Auxiliary gave \$600 towards this worthy cause.

The Legion is always pleased to assist the needy by providing comforts to those unfortunately hospitalized, confined or in distress.

Thank You,
B. Stevens Public Relations Officer

Sorry association disbanded

Dear Sir:

Midland and District Ability Association has decided to disband in this area and it will be the third time it has failed to materialize due to the lack of participation, etc., also there is no incentive to organize such a club as there are a lot of obstacles to overcome.

I am very disappointed that this community will not work together to better ourselves.

However, I am very optimistic that next year will be much better for the physically disabled person as it will be the year for the disabled 1981 and there will be resources available and also less discrimination toward disabled people.

If you are unemployed due to some type of disability and would like to do some part-time work, and also wish to help out to organize the Helping Hands Association Goodwill Services, in this community to help yourself to help others it could be rewarding, as I have and like to help others in the same situation, etc.

Should you wish to participate and become a Helping Hand member, please write to H.H.A., P.O. Box 621, Penetanguishene, Ont. L0K 1P0.

Yours truly,
Ray Lalonde Volunteer-Co-ordinator,
For the Physically disabled (Since 1975)

P.S. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and lets get out to the first meeting in Jan. 1981 to be held at the K. C. Penetang to be announced by media.

The spirit of the holiday season

Dear Sir:

As the Christmas season draws near, most of us are happy to take a pause from our busy work schedules and reflect on the symbolic meaning which is associated with this time of the year.

The Ministry of Housing and the Crown corporations associated with the Ministry welcome this opportunity to extend to all business associates warm holiday greetings and sincere good wishes for the new year coming.

You will no doubt understand that all our staff are public servants in the employ of the Province of Ontario. As such, they are prohibited, under the terms of their employment, from accepting gifts or benefits of any kind from those persons and firms with which the government conducts business.

This challenge, entirely proper and legitimate in a free economy, has to be met by the merchants in the downtown cores in terms of business improvement under the B.I.A., competitive pricing, extended business hours and all the other elements necessary for effective competition.

The municipality has little control over these matters, which are largely dependent upon the collective desire of the merchants for economic survival in a downtown location. The municipality can help by promoting main street revitalization programs through the Community Renewal Branch of the Ministry of Housing and by changing parking policies to provide parking facilities competitive with those provided by the shopping malls.

Council should explore every possibility, and take advantage of every opportunity to keep the downtown economy healthy and vigorous, both in the interests of community vitality, and in the narrower interest of protecting the business assessment, which forms a significant part of overall municipal revenues.

The second problem is that presented by a substantial acreage of urban type development constructed without benefit of urban services. It surely makes very little planning or engineering sense, for this development to proceed unserviced, when the potential for providing these services is available across Highway 27 in the Town of Midland.

Amendment No. 23 to the Township of Tiny Official Plan, based on the report of the Highway 27 Steering Committee under the auspices of the Tinv-Tay Peninsula Planning Board, and presently under review by the Ministry of Housing, recognizes in its servicing policies the need for joint servicing agreements to enable developments on the scale envisioned here to proceed in an orderly manner.

I thus suggest that Midland's approach should be to advise all parties concerned; the developers, the Township of Tiny, the Government of Ontario, that the Town of Midland intends, once the appropriate legislation presently before the Legislature as Government Bill 197, is in place, to apply to the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, under the Municipal Boundaries Negotiations Act, for negotiated joint servicing agreements between the Town of Midland and the Township of Tiny, to ensure that this extensive urban type commercial development proceeds in a manner not prejudicial to the long term interests of the Town of Midland and non conducive to expensive problems in future years.

The Town of Midland must emphasize in any such negotiations that the logical expansion of the municipality is westward. The very fact that the developers are planning a sixty store shopping mall, indicates confidence that the area which this mall is planned to service, will experience a growth in population sufficient to guarantee the economic viability of the complex; growth comparable to that envisioned in the Simcoe-Georgian Report, to the recommendations of which the Government of Ontario has made a policy commitment.

The eventual growth of the Town of Midland westward across Highway 27 will absorb the commercial development on the highway.

The Town has thus a compelling long term interest in ensuring that this commercial expansion is done in a way compatible with the principles of sound urban planning and not in the unplanned, haphazard way which has caused so many problems and proved so costly on Highway 26/27 in Vespra Township, north of Barrie.

There is an opportunity here to learn from and profit by, the unfortunate and expensive experience of Barrie with urban style commercial development on its border with Vespra Township.

Midland Council should act decisively to demonstrate that it is unwilling to see that experience repeated on its own municipal boundaries without doing everything possible to prevent it.

R.B. Platt
Alderman, Ward II

A time for brotherhood

by Mike Cassidy
Leader, Ontario NDP
MPP, Ottawa Centre
Christmas and New Year's is a time for celebration, a celebration for Christians of the meaning of the birth and life of Jesus Christ; a celebration for all of us of family and community.

This is the one time of the year when brotherhood and good cheer transcend strife, when we concentrate more on what is good and right in our lives than on what needs change and on what is wrong.

In Ontario today, many of us are blessed

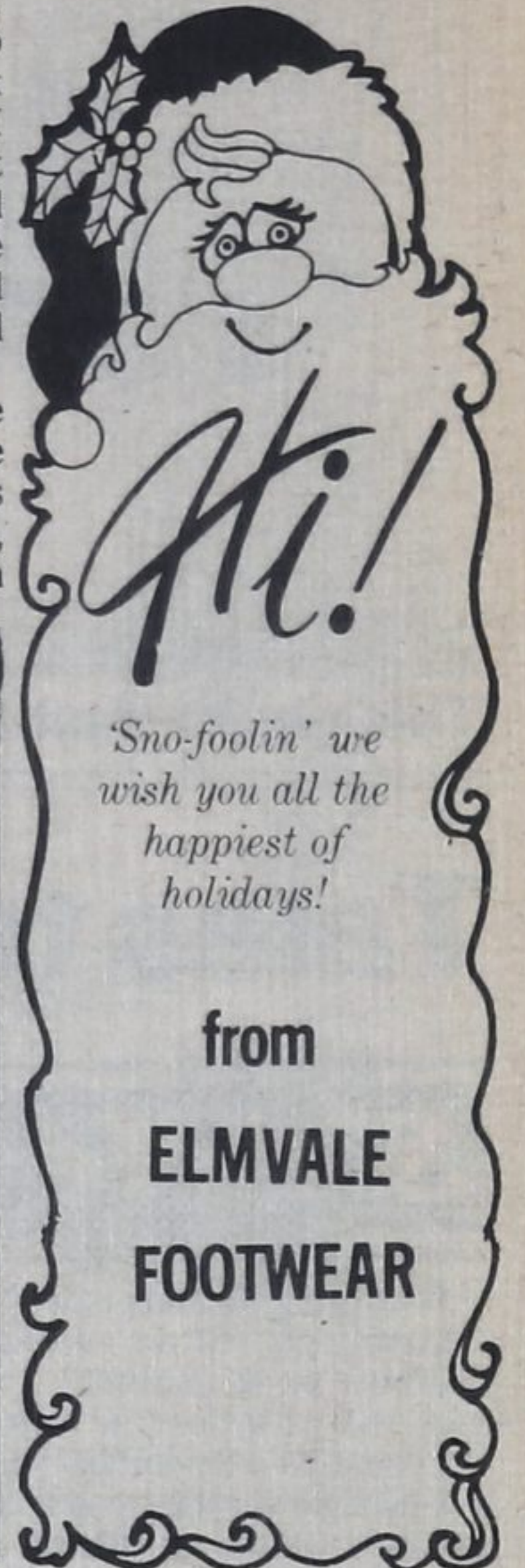
with a richer life than our grandparents had, a richer life than those in other lands and in our own land, whose lives are marked only by a constant struggle for food and shelter and human dignity.

As we sit together with family and friends, as we open our doors to our neighbours, I think many of you realize, as I do, how important friends and family and community — the caring bonds that hold our society together and enrich it — are.

We realize that love and caring are more important than riches and self-gratification, more important than

material comfort and success.

For all of us in the coming weeks, this should be a time when we renew our commitment to a society where the spirit of Christmas lasts longer than one week.



Christmas Blessings



Let peace and kindness reign in the hearts of all men.

Wood 'n' T's Shoppe

Main St., Penetanguishene

JOY AND PEACE

As we celebrate the birth of the Child King, let us pray for wisdom, understanding and love among all nations. A blessed, happy Christmas to all!

Jerry Light and his Staff



Penetang

