

Genier wants Tiny planning board expanded

by Adrienne
Graham Gardner

Difficulty in achieving a quorum at the Township of Tiny planning board has prompted a recommendation from that board that it be expanded.

The motion proposed by Gerard Genier of the planning board states "In view of the difficulty experienced by Tiny Township Planning Board in the past eighteen months in obtaining a quorum because of the non-attendance of Council members of the Board who had overriding commitments, it is recommended that Council enlarge Planning Board so that appointed members outnumber elected members by a factor of 50 percent."

All five members of Tiny council sit on the nine-member board, as well as on the Parks and Recreation board.

Although council members have attended a majority of regular meetings of planning board this year, the recommendation for enlarging the board comes as a result of an advertised public meeting held last month at which only Councillor Ron Hamelin was present from council. Of ten regular meetings of planning board held in 1982, Reeve Morris Darby has attended eight, Deputy-Reeve John Lackie six, Councillor Ron Hamelin seven, John Butler four and Gabe Brunelle seven.

Attendance by appointed members has been somewhat more regular. Chairman Peter Brasher attended nine meetings, Gerard Genier six, Neil Dillon seven, Ross Hastings eight and township planning administrator Roger Robitaille ten.

Council responded to planning board's recommendation by proposing that due to the lateness in present terms, it be tabled until new appointments are made to boards for the new year.



'Prize' on display

Native artist Don McLeay sits with his painting entitled "The Prize" at a display of arts and crafts at Midland's Civic Centre Wednesday afternoon.

McLeay, one of Canada's most sought-after native artists, says he enjoys painting what he calls "nostalgic history".

McLeay likes the good times

A woman stopped by Don McLeay's display to check on the price of "that painting over there, it's very nice." She might have been considering tossing it in her rec room between some team photos.

"That's a thousand dollars," smiled Don McLeay, adding, before the woman nervously returned the smile and moved along, "That's the price of fame."

"I hate to ask so much," McLeay said later, "but I just can't afford to keep the price down. There's a lot of demand and I just wouldn't be able to keep up."

Don McLeay is not a megalomaniac. He happens to be one of the best and most sought-after native Canadian artists in Canada, but, unlike some other major artists, he still has both feet firmly planted on the ground.

McLeay had a sample of his acrylic paintings, a few etchings and a collection of photos of some of his woodwork and totem poles on display at the Midland Civic Centre Wednesday. His was one of several displays of native arts and crafts organized by the Georgian Bay Tribal Council as part of its local Native Awareness Week program.

McLeay, 40, came to Midland with his works as a favor to a local friend from the Council. The 40-year-old Metis (his father was Cree, his mother white), born in North Battleford, Sask., said he doesn't like to get balled up in political issues but did have some words of encouragement for the Council.

"The local bands will have a lot more control over themselves with this kind of thing," he said. "And it's a whole lot better than being run from Peterborough or Ottawa."

"After all, five sticks are better than one," he said, referring to the five bands which make up the Council.

McLeay didn't begin his artistic career full time until he was 29. Before that, he was a construction worker.

"I read about other artists who say they've been drawing since they were four," McLeay says. "I wasn't like that at all. In fact, I

started out doing drawings for a roommate who was a wood carver so we could pay the rent."

McLeay doesn't have any problems with the rent any more; he can fetch about \$20,000 for a totem pole and has his works displayed all over the world, from the Toronto Native Centre to Europe.

Following his one-day stop in Midland he headed for a show in Regina, then it's off for a three-week run in New Mexico.

Soon, he'll be opening a gallery in Toronto with several other native artists. He'll provide acrylics -- his favorite medium and one which he intends to spend most of his time working with -- and the others will contribute works in specialties of their own.

He tries to concentrate on what he calls "nostalgic history", depictions of scenes from Indian life in the late 19th century re-created from stories he's heard from old-timers he meets across the continent.

"I like to paint scenes from the period when the Indian nations were most powerful," he said. "I like to paint the stories, the good things. I don't like to paint about the bad times."

History has, indeed, provided the good times for Don McLeay.

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1980 PONTIAC LEMANS
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