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Country Hotel For Alcoholics?

Metro's Proposal — Langstaff Jail Annex Stirs Markham Twp. Residents

"Affects Land 'Round Us Don't Like It" - Reeve Dean

by Mona Robertson

"For a township that has been dry since 1907, I think this is an insult," Hugh Brennan, Chairman of Markham Township Planning Board said last Thursday evening at a meeting of the board held in the municipal offices, Buttonville, when asked by "The Liberal" his reaction to the report that the Langstaff farm owned by the City of Toronto is to become a jail-annex for the Don Jail, to house drunks.

Ron Forrest, Planning Director for the township, expressed deep concern at such a development saying it would prohibit eventual extension of the sanitary sewer line to the north of No. 7 Highway and curtailment of industrial plans in the area, since this property formed one of two leading industrial areas in Markham. The other is in the Don Mills area.

Mr. Forrest said Markham has been negotiating for this land for sometime but has never had a satisfactory response from Toronto. "They said that if they put it up for tender they would respect Markham's zoning, but obviously with this new plan they have no intention of selling the land."

Reeve Wilfred R. Dean remarked, "This will affect land all around us."

Reflecting, Chairman Brennan asked, "How do they go about curing drunks, would they be confined indoors or outside?" And said rather hopefully, "perhaps they won't need the 900-acres, just 15 acres or so and the buildings. If they would make available to us the bulk of the land for industrial purposes it wouldn't thwart us."

When news of the jail-farm proposal broke, "The Liberal" was inundated by frantic calls from ratepayers in the area, among them the president of the Richvale East Ratepayers Association. Richvale would be one of the areas hardest hit by a hold-up of the sanitary sewer extension, and ratepayers do not want a jail in their district.

A plot to reopen the former Langstaff Jail Farm (at the junction of Highways 7 East and 11) was apparently by the City of Toronto, who owned the site, the land was zoned industrial by Markham Township and industrial buyers were said to be interested in the 900-acre plot which not only has access to Bayview Avenue, Highways 7 East and 11, with the proposed Highway 404 just east of the property adding further possibilities of turning this into a wealthy industrial strip which could not only bring prosperity undreamed of and added assessment dollars into Markham Township's treasury coffers — but would, by creating employment, help greatly in the economy of Markham Township and other surrounding municipalities.

That was the sublime aspect of the case. Now for the ridiculous side of the picture. Under this jail-annex proposal, Metro Toronto wants this valuable piece of property — to use as a country resort for its drunks. It is satisfied to put up 50 per cent of the asking price, provided the Ontario Government (which is said to represent all the people) will pay the other half. It will apparently tie up 900 acres of land to keep approximately 200 drunks under lock and key during a brief country holiday of from five days to — at the longest — three months.

Ratepayers President Speaks Out. As Fred Gerard, president of the Richvale East Residents Association puts it, "Using this \$3,000,000 property for about 200 prisoners is rather 'an expensive hotel.'"

Mr. Gerard told "The Liberal" he had heard a rumour about this new proposal for the Langstaff property and had unofficially asked Markham Township's Clerk H. C. T. Crisp about its authenticity. Mr. Gerard said the clerk confirmed the rumour saying, "Yes, it looks as if they are going to do it."

"I asked him, 'Is council going to fight it?' Mr. Gerard said, 'and Mr. Crisp said 'Reeve Clark (1960) and I have been to the city and we have explained

it is zoned industrial and Mr. Clark informed them a large industrial company is dickering to buy from us, but they do not want to deal with Metro since Markham Township would have to supply services needed. This industrial development would employ 2,000 men."

Mr. Gerard made it clear that he and his association do not say Markham could have bought and sold the land — but he could not help voicing the thought that if Metro is negotiating to buy the land from the City of Toronto more taxpayers' money will be needed, from the people to the south. He also pointed out the terrific loss in industrial taxes to Markham Township taxpayers as a whole.

"As far as we are concerned," he continued, "it will be a short term transit camp for drunks. A three million dollar property should not be used for this purpose. This property has a new super-highway going in on its south border, a railroad track goes through its centre, and it has two other through-highways bordering it — it is perfect for industrial land."

Mr. Gerard said he is also concerned with how this location of a jail will effect the area which is now surrounded with growing subdivisions. "Here we have Markham growing to the south — north, some day these two are going to amalgamate and once again Toronto's jail will be right in the centre of the best land. I suggest that Metro could build a million dollar building elsewhere — and save money. Instead of opening a \$3,000,000 hotel for drunks."

Reeve's Reaction. Markham Township's new reeve, Wilfred R. Dean, contacted by "The Liberal" said the first he heard of the jail-annex proposal was when he read it in the paper last Wednesday. Asked what his reaction to such a plan was, Reeve Dean said, "We don't like it. Apparently they have bypassed Markham Township in arranging this. They should have consulted us first." Reeve Dean pointed out that hitherto the taxes paid on this property by the City of Toronto had never been in proportion to the value of land and buildings. "Now, with water in this area we will lose more money. Having this property used as a jail will require many more services such as water, police and fire facilities."

The reeve said any further comments would be made after a meeting of the planning board Thursday night.

At the planning board meeting, which the reeve attends as an ex-officio member, along with council's representative on the planning board. Reeve Dean said he had abstained from making any positive statement regarding Metro's plan since he felt it was up to the planning board members to deal with the situation, and that it could then be discussed in council on the following Monday night.

Delegation For Council. "With regards to this new news about the jail-annex, the reeve continued, "I have had several calls from ratepayers, and one or two delegations will appear before council to discuss this. Ron Forrest said, 'I think we should write to the Mayor of Toronto and to Fred Gardiner, Chairman of Metro, and get their expressions on this matter, directly. We have had no official communication from anyone — and this directly concerns us.'"

Councillor Hooper reiterated Mr. Forrest's statement and said, "This would be a good time to ask them what they are going to do."

Chairman Brennan concluded the discussion on the land, which is presently rented out to farmers saying, "It may not be as bad as we think it is. This land has lain idle for two years, before that it was used for a mental hospital. They can't just go back and call it a jail farm (such as it was until 1937), there are other things to consider."

RICHVALE NEWS

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Many happy returns to all the people celebrating their birthday this month.

Miss Caroline Miller, Westwood Lane, her birthday on Sunday, January 15. Richard Sand, Maryvale Cres., celebrated his on Monday, January 16.

Mary Jane Quance, Roosevelt Dr. had her birthday on Monday, January 16. Miss J. Scott, Grade 3 and 4 teacher at Charles Howitt Public School, was guest of honour at a party her pupils gave for her on Friday, January 13, to celebrate her birthday.

1st Langstaff Auxiliary. On Wednesday, January 18 at the home of the treasurer, Mrs. E. Maybury, Edgar Ave., 1st Langstaff Scout and Cub Mothers held their first meeting of the New Year.

All of the year activities were discussed, with reports from the November bazaar, which raised over \$400.00 to the Christmas party given in December to all the boys and leaders.

The president, Mrs. R. Clark thanked the chairman of the bazaar Mrs. A. W. Miller and chairman of the Christmas party, Mrs. E. Edwards for their efforts and the committee which helped.

A new bazaar convener was chosen and a committee of three plus the president to organize it. Mrs. E. Spears, Mrs. A. Peck, Mrs. J. Howard were asked and they accepted.

The Father and Son Banquet was referred to the Social Convener Mrs. E. Sand, the date being in March, who will bring the information to the next meeting.

Mrs. Clark had attended a presidents meeting of the York Summit Area, on Monday, January 16, and gave us the findings of that meeting. A gang show has been organized for the area and the Scoutmaster, Mr. Brian Connett will be director, with Mrs. Clark as secretary. The Scout hut will be headquarters and a phone has been installed there. Thornhill High School Auditorium is the place that the gang show will be held on April 6, 7, 8.

Rehearsals are taking place every Saturday morning from 9 till 12 at Thornhill United Church. The auxiliaries are taking

turns running a canteen for the hungry, thirsty boys and 1st Langstaff will be doing their stint on Saturday, January 28.

Mr. Hugh Martin is director of music, with many thousands of dollars of instrumental music and costumes being loaned to help make this project a success.

A report was read by the secretary, Mrs. Howard, about the fall conference which 9 of the members attended at All Saints Church, King City.

A plea was made from the Cub Leaders for fathers to spend an hour each at the cub meetings, phone Mr. Les Walters if you are able to come out and help with any of the badge work.

A meeting of fathers of all the cubs and scouts will be held on February 6, at the Scout Hut, as the group committee has important business to be discussed.

A hobby show will be held again this year on February 25. All cubs and scouts are eligible and will be given lists of entries. Do get behind your son and see that he enters and help 1st Langstaff to win points.

The first meeting of the year will be held at the home of Mrs. E. Sand, Maryvale Crescent, on Wednesday, Feb. 1st. All Mothers of guides and brownies are requested to be there.

LANGSTAFF

Correspondent Mrs. B. Lepke Phone AVenue 5-3489

Birthday Greetings. Birthday greetings to Mr. H. Glassey, Garden Ave., who celebrates his birthday on January 25th.

Mr. and Mrs. Glassey have another celebration on January 31st when they celebrate their 18th wedding anniversary. We extend our heartiest congratulations to them on this happy occasion.

Visitors at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Glassey are Mrs. Glassey's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Bach. Mrs. M. Holt, Garden Ave., held a birthday party in honour of David Suter who celebrated his 2nd birthday recently. Guests included Mr. and Mrs. R. Suter and Sharon. Mr. and Mrs. N. Hicks, Ross and Francis.

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Town Council Considers Zoning—

(Continued from Page 1) pressed the hope that the definition of "family," "dwelling" and other terms in the new by law would end the multiple occupancy of single family units. He said in the past it had been difficult to enforce the by law and he hoped this one would have teeth in it. He told of a single family dwelling occupied by two brothers, each with a large family. These and other cases of hidden population were adding to our school costs with no corresponding increase in assessment. Councillor Mrs. Margaret Southwell declared the hidden population presented a real problem for the school board.

Solicitor J. D. Lucas told council the clauses in the by law are practical and enforceable. However doubt was expressed that even the new by law will solve all the problems of dual occupancy. The new by law permits more than one family to occupy a single family dwelling provided certain relationships exist.

Mayor Haggart stated "we must be careful in making restrictions." He said some suggested restrictions might impose a hardship on some people. Councillor Broadhurst said he hoped the by law would have the necessary restrictions but that any cases of hardship could be taken into consideration in enforcement.

Reeve Perkins thought the new by law "goes about as far as we can go."

Councillor Mrs. Southwell thought the by law should have teeth enough to clear up the difficulty of dual occupancy. She said many people who want to rent their homes have said they wouldn't mind paying an additional assessment.

Mayor Haggart suggested a poll tax was one method of searching out revenue from the hidden population.

Planning Board members J. M. Brown and John MacDiarmid attended the meeting and Assessment Commissioner Robert Johnston and Building Inspector John Hollowell discussed several clauses of the by law with council.

All details of the by law will be explained at the public meeting which will be held next Thursday, February 2nd, when copies will be available. Mayor Haggart urged ratepayers to attend the meetings so all phases of the proposal could be discussed and the views of the people heard by council.

Hidden Population. Councillor Tom Broadhurst expressed

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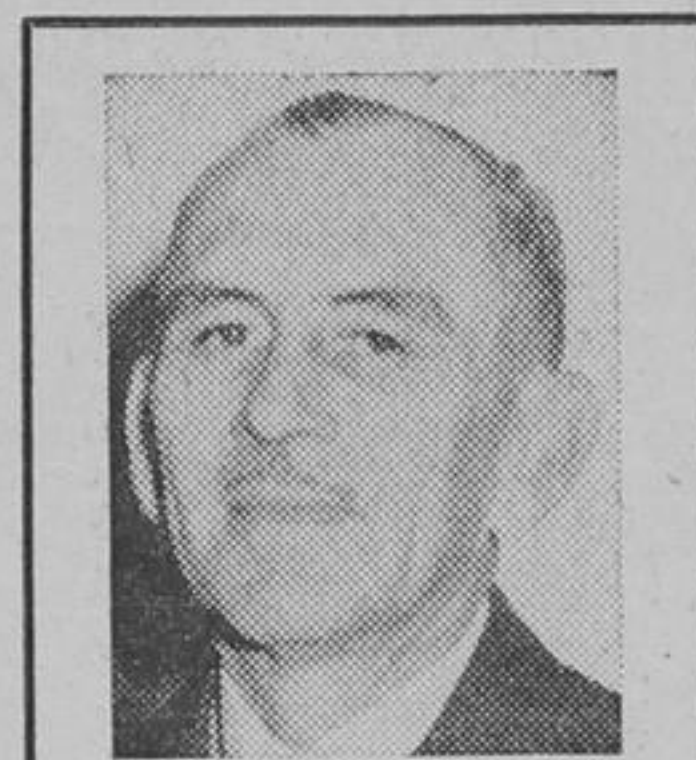
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