

Panel Of Experts Considers Co-ordination Basic Municipal Services



A panel of municipal experts including the Minister of Municipal Affairs for Ontario were heard at the public meeting held last week to discuss the possible future co-ordination of basic municipal services in the five municipalities of Richmond Hill, Markham, Vaughan, Markham Village and Woodbridge. Seen above are (left to right) Mayor Haggart of Rich-

mond Hill, Hon. Fred Cass Minister of Municipal Affairs, Dr. Edward Pleva of Western University, Professor Grant Crawford of Queens University, Dr. Albert Rose of the University of Toronto and Metro Planner Murray Jones.

(Photo by Huntley)

Mayor James Haggart welcomed 300 delegates — representing councils, school boards, planning boards, police and fire departments, and public services — to the co-ordination meeting held Thursday night of last week in the auditorium of Bayview High School, Richmond Hill. Municipalities of Markham, Vaughan, Woodbridge, Richmond Hill, Markham Village and Stouffville, were present, to hear a panel discussion by Dr. Albert Rose, Professor K. Grant Crawford, D. Edward, G. Pleva and Murray Jones, on co-operative co-ordination of basic municipal services. No decision was made at this meeting, which was simply one of discussion and review.

The mayor summed up the purpose of the meeting when he asked, "Do we have the right type of government, to serve the south of York County?"

"Our municipalities are presently constituted? With a coming a melting pot of change in a changing world of suburbia," Mayor Haggart stated at the opening of the two and a half hour session. And he declared "a new concept in our political set-up is needed. We can no longer apply a horse and buggy rural administration, in a rocket age."

Calling on municipal officials to look beyond their own set boards, not only in administration but in planning and educational facilities as well, he pointed out the sheer folly of one municipality installing basic municipal services — such as sewers and water — on one side of the street or highway, and the neighbouring municipality undertaking identical work directly opposite.

Where Does Future Lie? Previous to the meeting, the group of panelists had toured the areas concerned in what is now termed "Little Metro" and as a result of this review, Mayor Haggart asked, "Where does the future of this area lie, with Metro? With the county as

of York County?" The Hon. Fred M. Cass Minister of Municipal Affairs spoke next stating, "If you cannot solve your problems, the government will have to step in and they do not want to do that." He evinced personal pleasure at the formation of the study group whose aims are to work towards solving problems, which arise through population explosion, and the groups apparent interest in planning for the future.

Formation of Metro Dr. Albert Rose, Chairman of Housing for Metro, and Professor of Social Work at the University of Toronto, the first panelist to speak, reviewed the formation of Metro Toronto — which underwent exploratory moves as early as 1923 under the late Honorable George S. Henry's government of the province.

But it was not until 1948 that serious talk of a metro area — to include 23 municipalities — began, he said. At that time Metro planners sought to include Peel County, as well as those six municipalities present at this meeting tonight, he said.

Dr. Rose then compared population figures of the six municipalities in York County, concerned with some form of amalgamation at this time, as follows:

1948: Vaughan 7,785; Markham Twp. 7,519; Woodbridge 1,260; Richmond Hill 1,750; Markham Village 1,389; Stouffville 870, 1960: Vaughan 16, 376; Markham Twp. 13,294; Woodbridge 2,293; Richmond Hill 16,000; Markham Village 4,300; Stouffville 3,000.

"In 1953, when Metro was created," Dr. Rose continued, there were serious water, sewerage and transportation problems. But these services are now right up to Metro's border-line and planning for extension goes well beyond the future shape of development. Tomorrow is too late — we must plan now," he concluded.

Suburban Interests Are Wide Dr. Edward Pleva, Professor and Head of the Department of Geography at the University of Western Ontario in London and Chairman of the planning board for the Greater London Planning Area, stated in his opening remarks, "Fifty years ago Ontario could say exactly where he lived... a certain lot, a certain township. Today we live in many areas, we shop in one, attend church in another, our children often go to school in a third, and we vacation in a fourth, etc."

"But the Canadian dream is: a single dwelling in the suburbs. And this creates the major domestic problem in North America today," citing London, Ontario, as an example, he said, "the growth, overnight almost, has increased from 11 square miles to 66 square miles."

"How did we get unity, despite fragmentary areas? The close-in townships acted and amalgamated — because surrounding counties neglected the problem."

He advised the six municipalities in the south of York County to study the "meaningful resources" at their disposal in local government — and not lose a single day in dealing with their problems.

100-year Old Gov't Professor K. Grant Crawford, who was born in Nova Scotia is Director of the Institute of Local Government at Queen's, and a member of Kingston Planning Board and a former Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs for the Province of Ontario, said, "Owing to our conservative nature most of us are inclined to keep on doing things the same old way. We would sooner stay in a rut than make a new road!"

"But if times change, and institution (such as County Government) does not, then the institution must go — it must not impede progress." Professor Crawford maintained, pointing out the municipal institution in Ontario has been basically the same for over 100 years — "and there is conscious resistance to any change."

This panelist also emphasized, "Once municipal administration was 'community centred', but today's people are no longer thus, their interests are diverse and wide." And he concluded by saying, "Boundaries are man made, they can be changed at anytime. We may have to disregard municipal-area structure through political legislation; for it may be 'the winds of change' are starting to blow."

Municipal Planning Changes Murray Jones, director of planning for Metropolitan Toronto evinced the idea of an entirely new idea of municipal development emerging in the future, saying, "A kind of interdependence is developing. This kind of organization (a little Metro) might be necessary. But we are inclined to draw conclusions to early."

He said there is a need to change municipal planning and that Metro Toronto does have regard to land uses in fringe areas, and plans to arrange for development of the municipalities concerned on a balanced assessment."

Answering a question regarding development to the north of Metro Mr. Jones said, "We will probably become an east-west elongated system. Development in the north will be limited to small areas, over a considerable period of time."

He pointed out the CNR access line was set deliberately in the lower part of the county and a new east-west highway will take other form of transportation.

Dr. Pleva answered a question regarding taxation after annexation by saying, "It is just like a youngster before he starts earning money. You have to support him," he stated, "the system of grants is not up to date in Ontario."

He advised the group to consider the county as a whole. "Study whether services now existing in York County could not be co-ordinated to greater advantage — before breaking the county up," he stated. "York County is no longer agricultural, only 13 per cent of the assessment is in this category," he added.

In closing Mayor Haggart paid tribute to James McDonald, clerk of Vaughan Township who spearheaded the meeting. The other member on the committee was Reeve Mrs. Alma Walker of Markham Village.

A meeting of all members of the councils concerned will take place in the Richmond Hill Municipal offices, at 8 p.m., May 31st, (tonight) for further discussion on the subject.

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Watering Restrictions To Last Until October

Markham Township Council hastily put into effect a water conservation program in the south-west section of Markham Township, known as Water Area No. 1 — on May 19th, due to the weeks of dry, hot weather which caused a water shortage in the two Thornhill wells.

On May 22nd following the holiday, a delegation of Highland Park Ratepayers appeared before the council to thank them for the emergency measures adopted last Friday — when trucks with amplifiers attached toured the areas of Grandview Estates, Steele Valley Subdivision, and Highland Park — and requested residents to cut out all watering of lawns and gardens. At the same time, council gave three readings to a by-law to prohibit watering of lawns, "Except during the hours of 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. from May 1st to October."

Remember Severe Shortage Mrs. Eric Axelson, spokesman for the group of ratepayers present which included Mrs. Frank Kenwell, Mrs. Eric Higgs, Mrs. L. Dickenson and Herb MacIntyre, thanked council for their quick action over the weekend and said, "We remember that severe water shortage we had in Highland Park 11 years ago." At that time residents were entirely without water for three days and had to go to friends in Toronto to bring back drinking water.

Following this earlier water shortage Markham Township sank the existing two wells at Thornhill and everything was fine — until the two new subdivisions in the valley were opened.

Highland Park ratepayers want it perfectly clear that they have no grouse against the new residents — but bemoan the fact no consideration was given to further develop Water Area No. 1, when the subdivisions were planned and approved by planning board and council.

North York Needs One year ago the 1961 council applied to the O.M.B. to purchase three North York wells and to put a standpipe on Bayview Avenue. So far nothing has developed along this front.

The first alarm went out May 18th, when Highland Park residents discovered — in the

midst of one of the earliest heat waves in local history — there was not a drop of water in street level taps. People who had basements, with laundry tubs were able to get a slight dribble of water, but that was all.

No Air Conditioning or Coffee Two blocks north the Gem Store's air-conditioning failed first (it is necessary to have water for this equipment); then management had to announce that due to lack of water no coffee could be made for the restaurant clientele. Nothing daunted and mindful of the people who had gone to their store from the hot and humid outdoors, the store sliced and sold watermelon to assuage their thirsty customers, including many from the water-less area around Highland Park.

It was then council stepped in to the rescue — and notified residents not to use hoses for outside watering, etc.

The situation is now under control — and the only objector was a man who had newly seeded his lawn — and didn't think he should have to stay up until 10 o'clock at night to water it. Told of this by Mrs. Axelson, Reeve Wilfred Dean said, "People are more important than lawns."

Deputy-reeve Mumberson said, "The irony of this situation has been, that the Highland Park Ratepayers are the ones responsible for Water Area No. 1, coming into being. They paid for it, and now they have a water shortage after all these years."

Mrs. Axelson concluded her appeal by asking council to: "Please look after our future with a little more foresight, when planning subdivisions."

Grandview Estates

The Grandview Ratepayers' Association are sponsoring a public meeting on June 8th at Henderson Ave. Public School at 8 p.m. The four Federal candidates in York-Scarborough will each be allowed four minutes to speak. There will be a question and answer period. The four candidates are Frank McGee, Conservative; M. Moreau, Liberal; E. Phillips, N.D.P. and S. Birrell, Social Credit.

Honour District Girls At 4-H Achievement Day

One hundred and thirty one York County 4-H homemaking club girls completed the project "Separates for Summer" on May 12th at their achievement day. This was held in the Aurora District High School.

After a busy morning programme of judging classes and an activity based on fabric selection, the girls and leaders were served lunch by the York Centre District Women's Institute.

The afternoon programme began at 1.30 P.M. with all fourteen homemaking clubs taking part. Clubs presenting exhibits were, Bogartown, Vardorf, Buttonville, Queensville, Snowball and Nobleton. Demonstrations and skits were presented by Agincourt, Edgeley, Laskay, Purpleville, River Drive Park, Schomberg, South Vaughan and Temperanceville Clubs.

Highlights of the programme were the two fashion parades, when each member proudly displayed her new summer separates.

Mrs. Ross Armitage, Newmarket, President York Centre District Women's Institute presented county honors to ten homemaking club members who completed six projects. They were: Louise Walker, Bogartown; Diane Toyne, Buttonville; Beverley Hunter, Laskay; Anne Marten, Purpleville; Diane Maw and Joan Miller, South Vaughan; Diana Jennings, Temperanceville; Florence Cairns, Schomberg; Jean Armstrong and Sharon Bean, Nobleton.

Provincial Honours, the completion of twelve homemaking club units, were presented to: Margaret Jackson, Edgeley; Margaret Cairns and Nora Jane

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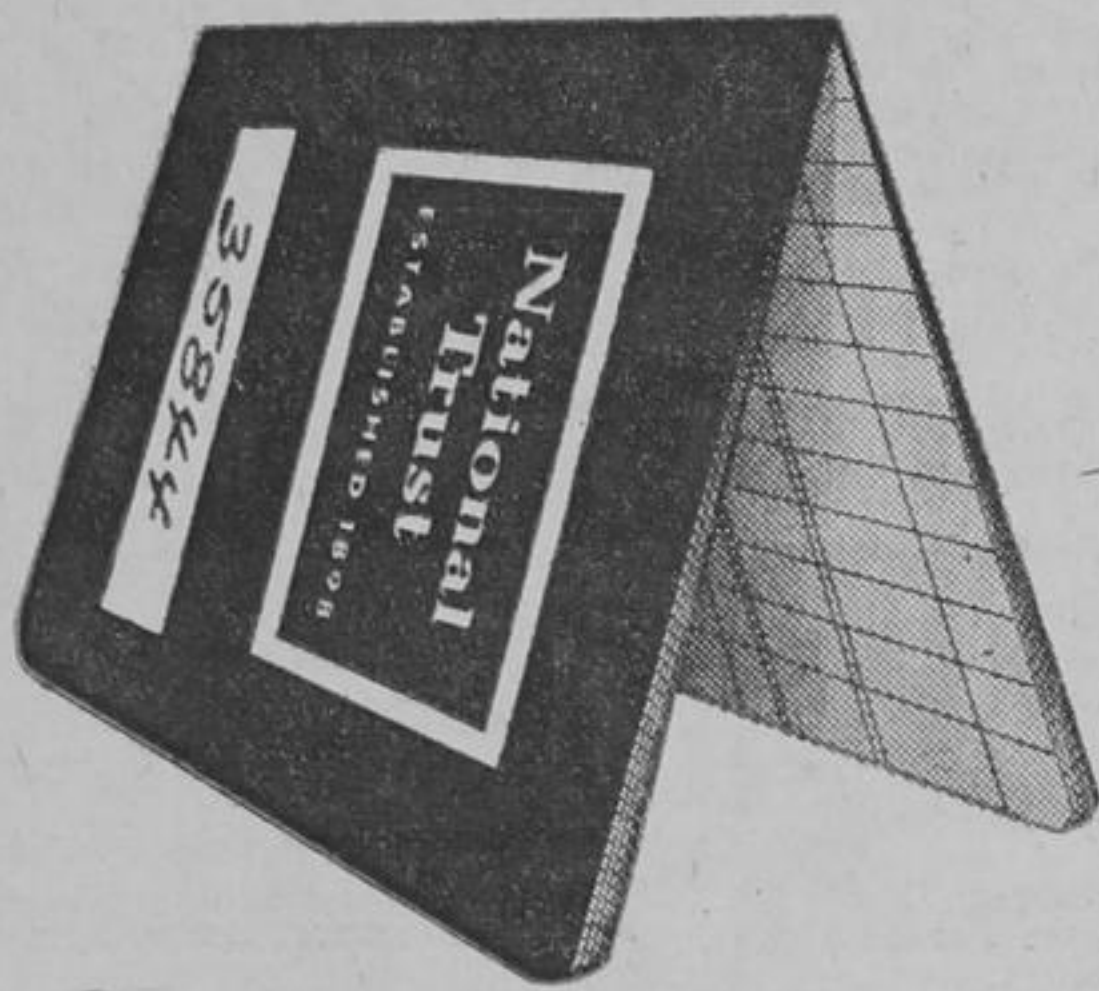
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