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Should Freeze Development

Water shortage, evidenced by necessary restrictions on lawn watering and rumors that the water situation is more desperate than is being told, lead us to believe that an immediate freeze on development (even in-filling) should be instituted by the

Town of Richmond Hill. Coupled with the water shortage is the demand for schools which residential development creates. A couple of weeks ago York County Board of Education approved debentures in the amount of \$2 million for new schools and additions (only the addition at Thornhaven is in this municipality) all adding to the taxation burden on local property owners. And there are still more new schools in the planning stages. We are not criticizing the board, for it is its duty to provide accommodation for the children generated by housing developments. It has no choice, since parents object to their children being housed in "second-rate" portable

classrooms. Nor do we believe that a proposed "estate-type" development in the Bayview - Gormley Sideroad area should be discouraged. This development will have its own well or wells

and operate on septic tanks so it will not tax the present facilities of the town. Assessment will be high on the luxury-class homes, will serve to increase the tax base of the town, and help relieve the tax burden. Moreover, the development will not create a large number of children to crowd available school space. Such development is permitted under the present zoning in the governing Markham Township Bylaw.

But, higher density development at lower assessment will serve only to place an additional burden on already overtaxed municipal services. The revelation that any person has the right to tap into services passing his (or her) property, recently, removes another weapon from the municipality in controlling development. And the municipality must be prepared to give the Municipal Board a good reason for turning down any proposed plan of development.

Other municipalities have forged themselves an effective weapon by passing a "holding" bylaw. We suggest that Richmond Hill can arm itself with a similar bylaw until water and sewage disposal problems are solved, at least.

Futile Cry In The Wilderness?

Outraged cries of being unfairly taxed by the powers-that-be are hardly new ones issuing from the lips of landowners but they keep happening nevertheless.

A recent case involving a Whitchurch-Stouffville landowner would seem a very valid, if futile cry in the wilderness. The owner, Joseph Sherman of Willowdale, appeared before Whitchurch - Stouffville Town Council regarding two 10 acre lots side-by-side which he owns on Concession 6 in that municipality.

Mr. Sherman described how his taxes under provincial reassessment at market value have jumped from \$85 on each lot to \$214 on land presently bushland with no immediate prospect of being able to build on it. He's being taxed for residential property which isn't even residential.

Mr. Sherman said he was sick of paying exhorbitant taxes and wanted to sell the lots but "can't sell the 10 acre lots because I can't get building permits for them."

The Whitchurch-Stouffville zoning bylaw prohibits issuing of any permits for residential building purposes on lots less than 25 acres.

All the members of Whitchurch-Stouffville Town Council could immediately offer Mr. Sherman was tea and sympathy, which they did. It's

a familiar story. Mr. Sherman's beef is with the province's assessing procedures which treat his "dead" land on a par with developed, residential properties. He had appealed his case but received little initial success and then gave up before carrying it to further lengths.

Obviously, this was a mistake on Mr.

Sherman's part but an understandable one. After a while, you just give up.

There was a suggestion that perhaps council should discuss Mr. Sherman's plight with the chief provincial assessment officer of the municipality and explain the situation. This could help, but we doubt it. The assessment department follows procedures too, and the matter would just be passed on and on and up and up to higher government officials. The changes, if any, will have to come in the Legislature and that could be a long way off.

The only immediate help council could provide Mr. Sherman and other landowners in similar predicaments would be to exchange its zoning bylaws such as Councillor Gordon Ratcliff suggested.

"We have to clear up the situation regarding our zoning bylaws such as this. Maybe we should allow building permits to be issued for this type of property."

This is an admirable idea and one council should seriously consider when it gets around to changing or revising its old bylaws. It seems very unfair that any landowner should be in the predicament that Mr. Sherman is in, paying high taxes for what amounts to be a white elephant at the moment.

Council can't dictate to the assessment department but it can strive to remedy the situation via its zoning bylaws, and should do so. Otherwise it could almost be accused — as Mr. Sherman ventured - of "getting money under false pretenses."

Business Reference Available At North York Public Library

ture for businessmen is now Businessmen interested in feet of cabinet space. affairs of nearly 2,000 Canadian a battery of filing cabinets 50 a microfiche reader. with almost daily additions. The paper form.

Information is gathered in ac- However, the information is obtainable from the Ontario of Britain. So this palace is in tive collaboration with securi- compactly stored on microfiche, Securities Commission, but every sense the personal proties commissions and stock ex- the most modern form of mic- will cost \$2.

Plaque Commemorates First Steam Train

On Dominion Day a historical plaque commemorating the first steam train in Canada West to travel from Toronto to Aurora was unveiled at the site of the CNR Station, Aurora. This plaque is one of a series being erected throughout the province by the Department of Public Records and Archives, acting on the advice of the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board.

Shown (left to right) after the ceremony are: N. Jolly, vicepresident, Aurora Historical Society; Eric Scott, president, Aurora Society; J. McIntyre, director, Aurora Society; Dr. G. L. Oliver, past president, Aurora Society; S. E. Spencer, Toronto Area Manager, CNR; Aurora Mayor Richard Illingworth; John Roberts MP York Simcoe; W. D. Piggott, assistant vice-president, Great Lakes Region, CNR; C. Hickson, former station agent, Aurora; William Hodgson MLA York North; Dr. E. S. Rogers, representing the Ontario Archaeological and Historic Sites Board; and Rev. H. W. McAvoy, Minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, who dedicated the plaque.

Notes On An African Safari..

(Roy Smith, a teacher in will publish weekly. Experi- the origin of its name. Experts Thornlea Secondary School, will enced in educational travel, Mr. suggest that it come from the tell about his trip to England Ship's School, has been conduction with "ruffs" or "piccadillies" worn by Ship's School, has been conductive the local gallants in the 17th and to Africa this summer, ac- ting trips for several years. It Century. The more romantic, companied by a group of stu- is suggested that students clip however, look upon it as a cordents, several from this area in these articles for further use in ruption of Pickadilly", a name - Editor) reminiscent, possibly, of the a series of articles "The Liberal" school. beautiful wild flowers which

The Sights And Sounds Of London

The Changing of the Guard

To continue our description of Thousands gather around One of London's most famous of the complete new stocklast issue, we are still in Lon- Queen Victoria's Monument in streets, was started as a bridle- taking. When it's finished, evdon and enjoying every moment. front of the palace to view the path for long ago, there was a ery property in Ontario will be beautiful in the region and it is such a shame to Our next planned tour includes famous ceremony of the chang-strand or path which sloped evaluated on the same basis - carry with it this unnecessary handicap. Buckingham Palace and the ing of the guard each morning down to the River Thames, market price - instead of on watching of the famous Chang- The Queen's Guard is provided This name has survived, and percentages that vary from one ing of the Guard. Buckingham by the guard's division. In the through the years the Strand town to the next. Palace is known all over the ceremony, the new guard has developed into the leading Uniform province-wide asworld as the home of Britain's marches behind a band from thoroughfare between the City sessment, a cornerstone of tax Kings and Queens. It is a gray-either Wellington or Chelsea of London proper and West-reform, requires updated evaluish-white rectangular building, Barracks. The guard's division minister. PETTICOAT LANE

NUMBER 10

exits of old London.

THE STRAND

BOND STREET

whose very mention is a mess-consists of five regiments, and age from home to Britons in from these, squads of personnel Is a "must", and we found including many interesting devevery corner of the earth, and a are chosen to be the guard of the trading being done right elopments that escaped official symbol of unity to millions of the day. The Grenadiers (white on the sidewalk or street from notice in the past. Now all those Dear Mr. Editor:men and women of the Com- plume on the left, and singly market stalls and wheelbarrows. tax dodgers who built indoor Few people know anything of (scarlet plume on the right, distance away, because only closets will be caught out.

home, which, though it lies be- the Scots Guards (no plume, with street. Also, we had to tune our roll will be started on a clean mentioned in the reports of the hind the iron gates of a palace, buttons in threes); the Irish ears to the Cockney jargon! And sheet: it's easier, from an adis in its essentials, so like thou- Guards (blue plume, with but- beware of pickpockets! It was ministration viewpoint, to catch cil. Which one will take out of sands of other homes all over tons in fours); and the Welsh colorful and interesting, and a up with all home improvements circulation the least area of Britain. The outside world, too, Guards (green with white rich experience, long talked in 1974 than it is to make ad- good farm land? knows little of the suite of of plume, on the left, with buttons about by our students as they justments to old assessment figfices which are the background in groups of five) It is a sight compared purchases and anec- ures in the 1971-74 years. of the Queen's public work, the worth seeing, and thousands are dotes. setting in which she plays her there each time the ceremony

strenuous part in the life of a is performed. A bit of educa- A place far different from If the freeze inspires new home ing uses on land which has less Purchased from the Duke of book! Buckingham in 1762 by King George III with his own money,

DOWNING STREET the unpretentious mansion be- This is a plain, brick house to look. One glance at the have made without official en- normal custodian of land zoned time picture story. came the home of the King and which is the official residence sleek, chauffeur-driven cars and couragement. And there is the as green belt, and 60% or so of his wife, Charlotte. George IV of Britain's Prime Minister. We the elegant shoppers, confirm it. administrative saving on not the land there is being farmed. commissioned John Nash (archi- noted that there were no official Bond Street was once a mud- having to make adjustments to There is obvious value for tect of London's famous Regent guards here, only two of the dy lane used by highwaymen assessment rolls. Street), to remodel the palace, famous London "Bobbies" (nam- and robbers. Today it is divi- Although provincially equal- point of exposure of children to but the king died in 1830 before ed after Sir Robert Peel), one ded into the old (built in 1686), ized assessment is a necessary country life, the purification of the repairs were completed on either side of the front door, and the new (built in 1700)! and positive step toward tax air, and the mere enjoyment of William IV disliked the palace Such jovial men, they seemed as One store which our students reform - and the moratorium country landscape, in having and refused to live there. He pleased to see us, as we were to found reasonable is Marks and adds zip to that step - the permanent farm areas as bartried to sell it to the army for see them! Incidentally, Number Spencers large department freeze helps demonstrate the riers between the restrictions a barracks. The 18-year-old 10 was the residence of Sir store. Then of course, there is utter irrelevancy of the prop- on the growth of cities.

Queen Victoria astonished George Downing, the secretary Selfridge, John Lewis & Co., erty tax as a base for municipal We must re-orient our whole everyone in 1837 by moving of the treasury in 1667. from St. James to Buckingham, Since our students travel on a One should never visit Lon- The province may arbitrarily A reference library in minia- changes throughout Canada. | rofilm and fits in four cubic and its fame and permanence limited budget, it is often fun don without going to St. Paul's cut off a source of potential were assured. In 1851, the to browse and perhaps pick up Cathedrai and the speakers' civic taxes, even though local available at the North York market forecasting, analysis, Microfiche is a 4" x 6" sheet Marble Arch was moved to its a souvenir item. Some of the corner. Public Library. CANFIL (Cana- underwriting, investment res- of thin, transparent photo- present site so that the palace better known places of interest dian Financial Information Lib- earch and portfolio manage- graphic film containing up to could be enclosed by the East along these lines which our That jewel of Sir Christopher vices. Municipalities must trust rary) is an information bank re- ment now have in Willowdale 98 pages of original matter in Front, which is seen from the group found absorbing, were Wren, following the Great Fire that the province will make up

cording in detail the financial access to enough material to fill micro form, easily interested in Mall. This east front was paid Carnaby Street, the mod capital in 1666 - has been called "The the difference in grants. for by the sale of George IV's - just a short, narrow street, Parish Church Of The Common- Ontario won't have truly recompanies. It is kept up to date yards long - if it were in The same information con-Royal Pavilion in Brighton, and but a wonderland for young wealth". I think the motto to sponsible local government untained in the library files is was not borne by the people people to visit and shop around. Wren in St. Paul's sums it all til the municipalities - not the PICCADILLY

free years. People long have complained that government's assessment principle is wrong - that property owners should not be

Tax Bill

assessment field.

Ontario's planned assessment freeze is a moratorium; it's no

more than that. But it will

put money in the pockets of

of it. The freeze - no new

taxes in home improve-

In essence, assessments

would stand at 1970 levels until

1974 (the 1974 assessment will)

be the base for the 1975 taxes).

up to \$2,500 won't be added to

the assessment until 1974 (at

which time the province hopes

at market values). That means a

recreation room added this year

wouldn't affect taxes until

For individual homeowners,

the savings could run to \$200

reckoning. Even though im-

provements which increase a

property's value eventually will

show up on the tax bills, the

homeowner adds to the value of

taxpayers who take advantage

erating influence any government has offered Those who grasp the oppor- to say the least!

tunity might produce enough or to make it permanent

In the long run, Queen's ment break in home improvements. By 1975, when provincewide market - value assessment is due to take effect in the tax used to border the western Ontario assessment will be a previous council. whole new ball game.

The present re-assessment operations in Hamilton are part

ations. The reassessments proplaced buttons; the Coldstream We had to park our coach some tennis courts in their clothes

the simple, dignified royal with buttons in sets of twos) pedestrians could get onto the In effect, the 1974 assessment does not seem to have been

tion right out of the history Petticoat Lane and the "Flea improvements, the enlarged fut- value as farm land. In the ten-Market". Bond Street caters to ure tax base could more than mile green belt around London, Only a professional photogthose who can afford only the compensate for the loss of taxes England, it is accepted as a rapher should be entrusted best - still it cost us nothing on improvements people would principle that the farmer is the to create your once-in-a-life.

and Bourne & Hollingsworth. | financing.

taxes now are hopelessly inadequate to pay for local ser-

up, when in translating it we province - make the decisions dilly seems unable to supply is (Continued On Page 12) cipal services.

Postponing The (Hamilton Speectator)

WATER SHORTAGE CRITICAL

Dear Mr. Editor:-

The recent flood of letters to "The Liberal" ments worth up to \$2,500 until regarding the ever present shortage of water in our 1975 - is the first real break town has prompted me to write you and ask the a senior government has offer- following question which I feel is directly relevant ed the home-owner through the to the crisis.

I would like to know how in the world we are ever going to supply water and treat the sewage created by the influx of new housing in our newly enlarged town, when we cannot, apparently, satisfy our present demands? The new housing I refer to is as follows:

• Housing for 30,000 people in the new BAIF De-

to have all properties assessed 600 suite apartment building on the Bond Steel

site on Markham Road • 142 new luxury homes east of Bayview, with at

least one acre lots to be watered. • 153 suite apartment building near completion on

Cedar Ave.

or more before the day of Migh-rise and townhouse development suggested for the northwest corner of Elgin Mills Road and

Bayview Avenue North. These are some of the new projects that I am

aware of. I am sure that there are more pending his house for up to three tax- approval by our town's planning committee and

One other unfortunate aspect of this critical situation is the fact that we cannot possibly attract future commercial development to our area while punished with higher taxes for our water supply continues as is. We have, I underimproving their homes and lots. stand, already spent some \$1 million in services in The moratorium doesn't break the area north of Elgin Mills Road. We desperately with the basic principle but need the industrial development and subsequent tax it's the first constructive modto rectify the water supply problem. A vicious circle

I would, in closing, like to raise one other point general community improve- in regard to the study and resulting master plans obtained from the OWRC (Ontario Water Resources Commission), suggesting that we connect our water system into the Metro Toronto System. I know that Park isn't exactly playing with the council under Mayor Tom Broadhurst and in parfire in giving people an assess- ticular Ivan Mansbridge, former councillor and deputy-reeve, put a great deal of hard work and effort into obtaining this master plan. I hope Regional Councillor Gordon Rowe will not (as he has bills, Ontario assessment is due stated he will do) pressure the OWRC too greatly to to take effect in the tax bills. supply something that they have already supplied a

It is my sincere hope that the present council will put this critical water shortage problem at the top of its list of priorities for the balance of its term of office. Our town is fast becoming the most

> BRUCE VENN. 419 Crosby Avenue, Richmond Hill.

approach to the location of all

vantages of any green belt are

Was this seriously considered,

ROY CLIFTON.

105 Wood Lane.

York Centre NDP

ever to be realized.

CHOOSING SENECA forms of development, if the ad-COLLEGE SITE QUESTION OF GREEN BELT

in the case of Seneca College? One consideration in choos ing a site for Seneca College

As for the cost to govern belt planning, it is obviously ment, it's probably negligible, good sense to locate non-farm-

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Raps Toronto-Centred Area Plan, 70-Lane Thornhill-Langstaff Parkway

perty of the Royal Family.

BY HAL BLAINE

Heavy criticism was levelled at the Ontario Government's Toronto-Centred Region Plan during the recent Central Ontario (York-Peei-Halton-Ontario Counties) Regional Development Council conference in Mississauga by Bruce McLaughlin, president of the McLaughlin Group of Companies.

Developer McLaughlin is mainly involved in creating a huge city centre for the sprawling new Town of Mississauga, but he has other interests including property in the Thornhill area.

McLaughlin sees the Toronto-Centred Plan as only planning for a fraction of the population that should be

He sees the plan as going overboard on overly expensive commuter facilities built to move too many people every day over unnecessarily

focal point. the people of Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill is his condemnation of the ple. transportation parkway belt.

nounced plans are being prepared for such a parkway. McLaughlin says the basic

regionalized city concept of the Toronto-Centred Plan is absolutely wrong for people. He says the plan should provide for a lot more people, but in a large number of separate downtown centres that would reduce commuting distance and transit

70-LANE PARKWAY McLaughlin warned the

plan means something like 70 lanes of traffic creating an impenetrable wall through the Woodbridge, Langstaff, Thornhill, Old Markham Town strip.

be buried and the Toronto-Centred Plan will mean an unbelievable jungle of steel He predicted the proposed parkway belt between Rich-

mond Hill and Thornhill will long distances to a single be like the shoreline expressways between Toronto and Particularly of interest to the lake, where yet no device has been found to bridge the barrier to livability for peo-

along the Highway 7 align- destroy the quality of urban Expressway. ment. The province has an- life as we can envision it to

be. It should be somewhere north of the Ontario lakeshore cities. A communications and transportation corridor is intended to unite cities, not to split them. This is going to split the develop-

"The Toronto-Centred Plan will tend to increase commuting, when it should minimize it. The planners aren't designing to an optimum scale. We need systems designed

ing cities to the north," he

"Are we designing a megalopolis that is workable, economical and pleasant for people?" he asked.

McLaughlin said the gov-He added that hydro can't ernment is spending too much money on transportation, education and bureaucracy. He said it is planning to spend too much trying to make Toronto a commuter orientated centre.

INFLATION CAUSE wrong and excessive spending are the real cause of in- injuring the public interest flation, and that the direc- of this whole region, Ontion the government is tak- tario's first megalopolis, and ing is indicated by the de- the whole province. "The parkway belt will cision to stop the Spadina

McLaughlin said the basic ment for the Toronto-Cen-

concept of transportation and population in the Toronto-Centred Plan is fundamen-

He said planning for eight million people for the "Golden Horseshoe" of Ontario is silly, since the 60 million people of Great Britain could be put in the area.

"This is a grossly inade-

quate plan. We should be aiming for a minimum of 10 million people and a maximum of 20 million," he said. McLaughlin said one of the main problems causing the skyrocketing costs of home building lots in the Toronto-Centred Region is the time

it takes to get them approv-

ed by government. He said

there is a need for time limits on development regu-The Mississauga developer warned that the Toronto-Centred Region Plan should be given the serious atten-He said these kinds of tion it deserves, since it could - in perpetuity - be

SUDDEN WRENCH

tred Region is with respect to many fundamental points, contrary to the intentions of many of the municipalities within the region. The proposed planning concept does not reasonably accommodate developments and projects which have been evolving over the past two decades, under the direction of local governments in conjunction with responsible major de-

velopers. While the principle of a regional master plan sound, the arbitrary imposition of a plan is undemocratic. uneconomic. destructive of bona fide private rights, and at least risks doing enormous injury to the long term public interest.

"It is imperative that private developers and local governments be permitted to play a larger role in the early creation and establishment of the master plan. . The basic concept behind the design proposal is the intention to cause Toronto to

regional city. . "The Design for Develop- the central city of Toronto, stantially self-sufficient, rait is wrong to cause Toronto ther than primarily act as

to become a daily or even frequent focal point for the people of a large geographic region such as is dealt with under these design proposals, said McLaughlin. PEOPLE NOT MACHINES "Planning should not be

ST. PAUL'S

dominated by transportation concepts of dubious merit. The technological ability to cope with the time-distance factor of transportation is not justification for creating a need, and then establishing expensive transportation facilities so that increasing numbers of people can and will be moved over longer distances. People are not machines to be plugged into a mechanical transportation network, notwithstanding the enormous social costs, human tension, and urban pollution generated by such a system.

"Therefore, the basic concept of the proposal, the rewrong for people. Rather, we should seek to create a multiplicity of well-integrated become a commuter-oriented, communities, of optimum size, with high selectivity of "While there must always service and amenities. These be convenience of access to communities should be sub- at the present time is pro-

dormitory communities. "We must structure our first megalopolis to minimize transportation costs, tension, and pollution. We must defy unpleasant sprawl. The regionalized city is merely mechanized sprawl GROSSLY INADEQUATE

o"A reasonable population forecast related to mature or optimum development is an essential tool in the creation of the regional plan. Under the design proposal, Zone 1 is expected to accommodate 5.7 million of the region's 8 million people, by the year 2000. The basic structure selected is based upon these forecasts and related to development at the year 2000. This is grossly inadequate

"The world population presently is 3½ billion. United Nations demographers predict a world population of gionalized city, is absolutely 6.7 billion by the year 2000. World population is doubling every 35 years. In theory at least, within 100 years the world's population could exceed 25 billion.

"The rate of urbanization bably double the population (Continued On Page 12)

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