

# Press Province For Action On Housing Crisis

The local and federal levels of government are pressing the provincial government for policy clarification and action in the housing field.

They were disappointed that July meetings at Peterboro haven't yet resulted in an opening of the provincial barriers to the flow of available federal money to the municipalities for land banking, services and neighborhood improvement.

About all that was gained at a federal - provincial - municipal Toronto meeting recently was provincial agreement to allow municipal representatives to attend meetings of a new federal-provincial staff committee on housing budgets and operating agreements. The aim is to assure municipal participation. Municipalities have long sought the right to be able to deal directly with the federal government.

Federal Housing Minister Ron Basford said he has funding available and is willing to lend it directly to the municipalities. But constitutionally the approval of the province is required.

The spokesman for Ontario's municipalities, Whitty Mayor Des Newman, strongly urged greater municipal power in the housing field. He said it was time to stop talking about the land-shortage housing cost crisis and take action.

"The approval in principle of the provincial Cabinet of municipal land assembly and land banking is welcomed. But we would urge the province to move from approval to the necessary legislative changes that will bring it into effect," said Newman during his opening remarks at the tri-level meeting.

But Newman didn't reserve all his ammunition for use against provincial inaction. He also called on the federal government to respond to proposed policy changes in National Housing Act amendments.

Housing Minister Basford asked for more co-operation in the development of innovative projects to help solve the present dilemma in housing.

Provincial Treasurer John White made it clear to the meeting that the province isn't going to act piecemeal on the recommendations made in the (provincial housing) Comay Report until the entire report has thorough study. He included land banking in the matters requiring such previous study.

Treasurer White told the municipal delegates that the province can't introduce legislation for land assembly until next year. He said there are already about 100 bills before the House. These would have to be dealt with and time wouldn't permit proper study of land banking legislation in time to get it under way this year.

Also White said Ontario hasn't developed a program for rehabilitating and maintaining the existing housing stock.

The federal government has been anxiously waiting to conclude an agreement with the province so that its neighborhood improvement program can get going here. There was some chance further talks this month could result in a provincial commitment to enter the program, it was said. Basford urged Ontario to present preliminary estimates of the volume of National Housing Act funding it will require over the next one to three years so the housing budget can be set.

The federal Housing Minister said last year was a record for house building in the province with more than 100,000 units started, 60% of them involving NHA. This included 12,000 low income housing units and another 50,000 insured loans. He said Premier William Davis' 1974-75 target of 46,000 additional home building lots is formidable.

"This represents an increase in the anticipated number of lots coming onto the market in each of those two years in the order of 25%," he said, adding that NHA and CMHC programs would get behind the Davis effort to the fullest extent possible.

Basford stressed concern over the rate of low income housing starts. He noted it has been dropping about 2,000 units a year for about three years to this year's level of about 10,000 units in Ontario this year.

"At Peterboro five months ago we were all agreed about the housing problems that faced the people of Ontario. Land prices were too high and rising, there wasn't enough low income housing and housing costs were putting good quality housing out of the reach of many. Today these problems are still with us and, if anything, they are getting worse," said Basford.

The federal Minister agreed that the overall level of starts in Ontario has been satisfactory.

Municipalities' spokesman Newman said provincial action is needed to allow local gov-

ernments to take advantage of the new federal legislation. He said the municipalities also need to know whether or not the province will be providing additional financial assistance in the housing field.

Newman also included among his major points a request for information on the manner in which the municipalities will be involved in setting housing policy priorities and in the implementation of planning. He was dissatisfied with the results that have so far followed the July meeting in Peterboro.

"Municipalities must be involved in planning, setting of federal and provincial housing budgets for the province, and program allocations within those budgets."

"A ritual restatement of the need for municipal involvement, after which the federal and provincial governments go off and do their thing, won't suffice," said Newman. "A mechanism for ensuring municipal input into budgets and operating agreements should be adopted at this meeting and a staff committee should be struck to report on the best method of municipal input," he said.

Discussing non-profit housing, Newman indicated he wants the province to pass legislation that will clarify just what the municipalities can do, and to authorize them to build or acquire non-profit housing without individual project approval. Here again he didn't win much support from the province.

Neighborhood improvement programs also came in for a bit of criticism from Newman and other delegates, but Basford defended the plans set out in recent NHA amendments.



(Photo by Fawn)

## Credit Union Week In Richmond Hill

Next week, October 15 to 20, is Credit Union Week in Richmond Hill. To launch the celebration, Mayor William Lazenby (centre) is welcomed as the 1,000th member of the Richmond Hill Credit Union. Presenting the mayor with his membership certi-

cate is John Pounder, manager of the credit union, and Ward 6 Councillor Lou Wainwright a director of the local credit union. The mayor has issued an official proclamation of Credit Union Week.

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**NEWMARKET:** Construction of entrances into Upper Canada Mall from Yonge Street and Highway 9 will cost the Ontario Government \$96,556.50. The contract has been awarded to K. J. Beamish Construction of Thornhill with work starting October 15. Most stores in the new mall are scheduled to open next March.

**NEWMARKET:** Because of a new resolution last November the South Lake Simcoe Conservation Area paid property taxes totalling over \$4,800 on its two parks in this municipality this year. Authority Secretary-Treasurer Mrs. Myrna Hunter reported that Newmarket had just never billed the authority before.

**WILLOWDALE:** About 50 members of the Temple Sinai Congregation on Wilson Avenue left Monday for a two-week tour of Israel. Some cancellations had been received because of the war in Israel and the Golan Heights, site of fierce fighting between Israeli and Syrian Armies was removed from the itinerary. The Sinai Peninsula was not on the itinerary.

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### John Zupancic Reports

#### Success Of Open Area Schools Depends On Dedicated Teachers

One of the problems encountered at the recent conference on open area schools held in Vancouver was in definition, Superintendent John Zupancic told York County Roman Catholic School Board October 2. What do we mean by open area? An open area facility is just that, he said, to accommodate two, three, four or eight classes and as many or more teachers. "But the delegates from Ontario were more interested in open education — where the team of teachers plan the day's work for the whole team, share their talents, relate to each other, know what is going on, are responsible for all the children in the area and do evaluation work."

**3 CLASSES PREFERRED**  
The conference agreed that with more than four classes in one open area, greater problems are encountered. Three classes seemed to be preferred, although many favored two classes in each open area because of staffing problems.

Mr. Zupancic reported that the conference was told that the open area concept was imported from the U.S.A. a few years ago without much thought being given to expense and teaching staff. But it seems to be working well in some areas because of dedicated teachers. In some cases the concept was adopted wholeheartedly. There were instances where a new school was built with one big open space for all grades, teachers were hired and given a one-week indoctrination summer course, but the experiment failed because they hadn't a feeling for the open education concept.

He reported he had visited one open area school in Vancouver and found that the children seemed happy and were doing good work. The flexibility between the teachers was not there yet as they had been together only two years.

**HIGHER COST**  
Open education carries a higher cost factor since the teachers need time for team planning. The conference agreed that some kind of teacher help has to be provided and in some schools this has been given by volunteers taking over the class in art, crafts, music, or other areas. In most cases an extra staff member has been assigned to relieve the teachers of the team for planning sessions.

It was later contended that cost need not be higher for the open area school, with good architects and good planning. It was conceded that costs will be greater in the future no matter what kind of school is built. Staffing problems are the main ones. If teachers are hired and assigned to a team without preparation the board is asking for failure, Mr. Zupancic said. The team has to be planned in advance and moulded as it works together. If that doesn't happen, then it's no good.

**WORK HARDER**  
In the team teaching situation the teacher has to work harder, he or she is on view all the time, teaching in front of colleagues. Team teachers must share their talents and share the planning. Of course this can be done in the traditional style school, but this does

not have the flexibility available in the open area school. That the staff and its talents can be used to best advantage in an open area school was the consensus.

**TWO EXTREMES**  
The two extremes in the educational field, are the barn, without any closed areas to which the children and teachers may retreat for peace and quiet and the traditional classroom school where each class is shut away from the others and there is no communication on the pupil or teacher level. He warned that the noise level will definitely increase with the number of pupils in an open area, but with good planning this can be kept under control.

Mr. Zupancic countered criticism of the teachers' colleges by stating that they have only 18 weeks of lecture time in which to give the students a knowledge of basic pedagogy and child psychology as well as providing time for them to observe teaching methods and participate in teaching in classrooms. "We will just have to concentrate on putting money into in-service training programs and in bringing knowledgeable people in to talk to our teachers, encouraging them, listening to their needs and giving them advice."

**GOOD WORKING GROUP**  
Three people are as good a working group as you can get, Mr. Zupancic stated, and the best situation is having three classes of 30-32 pupils in a four classroom area, since teachers and pupils want and need periods of some kind of isolation. Since the size of classrooms is controlled by the Departments of Education, it was suggested that a good architect could provide this extra space by cutting down on hallway space.

**KEY PERSON**  
The principal is the key person in an open area school. He must have knowledge and special qualities and the teachers must be trained. It takes time, said the superintendent. "I've found that if you try to do a lot of things in a hurry, you are in trouble. Those taking it slowly are making progress." Programs must be set up and evaluated. The public must be kept informed of what is going on and it must be proven to the public that the quality of education is being improved.

"Those boards who don't go into open education are soon going to find themselves behind the 8-ball," he warned. "They had better get on the band wagon and get started." The York Board has open areas for team teaching in the year-old John XXIII Separate School at Unionville. It's now in the process of engaging an architect for the proposed new school in the BAIF area. Before determining its design the board will study the open area concept in considerable depth and discuss it with the architect.

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### ONTARIO CREDIT UNION DAY PROCLAMATION

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WHEREAS, the Credit Union members throughout the world will celebrate International Credit Union Day on Thursday, October 18th, 1973, and

WHEREAS, Credit Unions provide an invaluable means whereby people may pool their savings, and assist themselves to fill their needs for credit at a low cost, and

WHEREAS, Credit Unions have proved an effective and versatile tool for combating usury, unfair credit practices, and encouraging thrift, and

WHEREAS, these Credit Unions not only promote the economic security of their members, but also strengthen democracy, encourage individual responsibility and the practice of true brotherhood and thus benefit our entire community, and

WHEREAS, the town of Richmond Hill (now in its Centennial Year) has a community-wide Credit Union with a membership of nearly one thousand

**I DO HEREBY PROCLAIM**  
Thursday, October 18th, 1973 as  
**CREDIT UNION DAY**

to be observed in Richmond Hill and urge our people to give fitting recognition at this time to the many benefits brought to them through Credit Unions.

**AND ON THIS OCCASION, I extend to the officers and members of the Richmond Hill Community Credit Union my greetings, congratulations, and sincere wishes for continued success in serving their fellowmen.**

Given under my hand and the seal of Richmond Hill, Ontario.  
**WILLIAM C. LAZENBY,**  
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