

Residents call 'parkway belt' misnomer

Parkway
By Marion Hohener

RICHMOND HILL — The goals of the parkway belt system were questioned last week by executive members of Ward 3 Ratepayers Association.

Dave Taylor, executive director of project implementation and Zdravko Weing, senior planner, met with the group to discuss informally the issues related to the parkway belt.

The group questioned whether the

government committee was, in fact, taking note of the public's input into the hearings. This was uppermost in their minds after Taylor forgot to keep the original appointment and the meeting had to be deferred.

One Ratepayers member, Ruby Birch, pointed out that the hearings were costing a great deal of money, yet due to a recent court ruling the taxpayers were inhibited in making their briefs. This, she said, seemed like "communist-style" tactics in simply passing whatever legislation the

government wanted, regardless of the public's feelings.

Taylor denied this would happen and said he felt that the hearings were being carried out democratically.

The goals as stated in the Parkway Belt West draft plan are as follows:
— To define and separate the urban areas from the other, giving their residents a sense of community identification.

— To link the cities with corridors that more people, goods, energy and information without disrupting the

communities served by Parkway Belt facilities.

— To provide additional open space and sites for recreational facilities for neighboring populations.

— To provide a land reserve for unforeseen future needs.

These goals were acceptable to the ratepayers group. In fact, they suggested, the description seemed to fit the Langstaff Jail Farm perfectly.

The ratepayers want all or part of the farm to be included in the Parkway Belt, but could not make this recom-

mendation at the hearings due to a court ruling forbidding mention of property outside the proposed belt.

The group protested that the belt in this area should be simply called a "Hydro Belt" rather than "Parkway Belt," and that this was surely contravening the goals of the system.

Taylor pointed out that the goals varied from area to area, and that not all the goals would be applicable uniformly throughout the belt. In some cases, such as in the Richmond Hill area, only one of the goals is applicable,

and then only partially.

The last of the hearings will be in Etobicoke Oct. 18-28.

During November, time will be given to lawyers dealing with specific issues. The hearing officers will then make recommendations and these, along with the hearing results, will be made public, sometime in February or March 1977.

Meanwhile, the public may write to Treasurer D'arcy McKeough and other politicians regarding their concerns in Parkway Belt matters.

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