

Public shows little interest in hydro restructuring

They didn't exactly break down the doors to get to the meeting Thursday night.

Called to discuss hydro restructuring in Richmond Hill, the public meeting at the Richmond Hill High School attracted fewer than 15 residents.

About 30 people attended the two-hour session, but half of them were local councillors and hydro representatives.

Hydro restructuring has been studied in York since the area became a Regional Municipality in 1971.

Then, 14 municipalities were melted into nine, but the hydro structure remained the same.

It meant that in the 'new' Town of Richmond Hill, residents were served electricity from three systems.

The Richmond Hill Hydro Commission served the old town, while the Vaughan Commission controlled the Richvale area and west.

Northern areas were on rural Ontario Hydro rates.

Sam Cook, chairman of the restructuring committee, told the audience Thursday that municipal hydro systems have been frozen since the 1971 election.

Richmond Hill acquired its own system in 1957, when the municipality officially became a town, he said.

While council has not made a final decision on what system should serve Richmond Hill, most councillors seem to favor the "lower tier" method.

This system would bring everyone inside the Hill boundary under the same

rate. It would mean a saving for some, and an increase for others.

According to the committee's figures, the lower tier would cost residents 2.71 cents per kilowatt hour, compared with 2.72 cents in the town joined with Markham and Vaughan in a service area.

The upper tier system, which no one appears to favor, would cost 2.78 cents, while the system now serving the old town could cost 2.60 cents.

The latter, however, excludes residents on rural hydro in Richmond Hill, who would pay 2.95 cents per kilowatt hour.

Those rates are based on educated guesses for 1978, and Mr. Cook told the audience they could expect another 26

per cent increase in the wholesale cost of power in the next two years.

"It's going up steadily," he said. "In 1975, it went up 30 per cent, last year it went up 22 per cent."

In Richmond Hill, Mr. Cook noted, 85 per cent of revenue to the local hydro commission goes to pay for wholesale power.

"There's only 15 per cent left to run the system," he said. "It's very little control."

Meanwhile, hydro users here can expect to pay the tab on about \$2 million worth of Ontario Hydro assets in this area.

"They can be purchased similar to a time-payment plan at nine per cent interest charge," Mr. Cook said. Councillor Marylo Graham suggested

the assets had been partially paid already, because Ontario Hydro won't have to service the debts anymore.

"You're not getting it for a dollar or anything like that," Mr. Cook said, noting the price would be the depreciated value of the assets.

Ed Nokes, executive director of the Ontario Municipal Electric Association, told the audience that "unallocated depreciation" would help.

"It's a figure, which relates to a retail division of hydro, but they haven't put it

anywhere," he said. "But it does tend to lower the price of the assets."

Gormley resident Ann Gold wanted to know if rural residents who have been paying higher rates would get a rebate.

Mr. Cook replied it was not likely.

Gunter Springer of Richvale is content with the way things are.

"We just get even with Richmond Hill and now you come along and raise it again to take in the north," he said.

Council is expected to deal with the issue in the near future.

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Committee to discuss 133-acre "major park"

Richmond Hill Parks and Recreation committee is expected to deal with a proposal tomorrow night to build a major park site in the eastern section of town.

The farm site at the corner of 18th Avenue and Leslie Street is being looked at as a feasible location.

Consisting of nearly 133 acres, the farm could become the scene of a sports stadium which would seat up to 5,000 people; a works yard and service centre; a new home for the Richmond Hill Agricultural Society; a municipal

nursery; tennis courts and clubhouse; lawn bowling areas; picnic areas; and parking for 1,600 vehicles.

Already on the farm, the allotment gardens would be included in the new plan.

Provisions would also be made for the Live Steamers Club to set up a track layout around the perimeter of an area set aside for minor sports facilities.

A report to be presented at tomorrow's meeting says the Richmond Hill Agricultural Society has been holding its annual fair at the Town

Park site and has been experiencing problems of overcrowding.

"It is conceivable the Society would be prepared to undertake to construct a model children's farm that would enable children to be in close proximity to domestic animals," the report says.

The model farm, buildings, shed and open space required by the Society need not exceed eight acres and, during their annual fair, additional land of the park would be available for competitions and exhibits.

Also suggested in the report is the establishment of a setting for a mass

display of roses of every variety and species.

"Such an attraction would draw visitors from a considerable distance as does the tulip festival in Ottawa," the report states.

"An annual rose festival in June of each year combined with arts and crafts displays, pageants and, perhaps a parade through town to the site of the rose garden could be an irresistible attraction," the report continues.

It also suggests construction of a small conservatory and greenhouse complex with the conservatory "providing year round displays of indoor plants, while the greenhouse would be used for specific floral displays through the year, as well as the production of annuals, cut flowers and plants for parks displays, municipal buildings and street planters."

In the sports field would be facilities for softball, baseball and soccer.

The report suggests a total of 12 lighted tennis courts with a clubhouse be built.

Also to be recommended to the committee tomorrow is that a landscape architect consultant be engaged to produce a master concept for the site and to conduct soil tests.

The reports suggests cost of that service be limited to \$7,500.

Parks and Recreation Committee members meet in the council chambers. The meeting gets underway at 7:30 p.m.

Amusement park hearing resumes tomorrow morning

The provincial hearing for objectors to Vaughan's 320-acre Theme Park commercial recreation project has been adjourned to 10 a.m. Thursday.

The delay was requested by the town Monday because of a new discovery of traffic access possibilities.

Vaughan Solicitor Tom Fraser indicated work is being done on a proposed entrance remote from the Maple neighborhood.

A meeting was scheduled with Circle Ridge Investments Ltd. last night. The company owns land at Rutherford Road and Highway 400.

Also a special meeting of Vaughan councillors was scheduled for today. Citizens filled the Vaughan town council chambers when the hearing opened Monday morning. The session lasted about an hour.

Presiding were two vice-chairmen of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), Armour McCrae and D.D. Diplock.

Chairman McCrae was told that active consideration of Concept 3 wasn't complete.

Concept 3 would heavily reduce the amount of traffic and lane construction on Major Mackenzie Drive.

It would provide Highway 400 access to the park site along ramps from the highway to Rutherford Road and along a road parallel to Highway 400 from Rutherford.

But even if the main entrance is moved to Rutherford Road, York Region's traffic authorities want an underpass at Major Mackenzie to connect the northern 90 acres of the park property to the southern 230 acres.

The developer, Family Leisure Centres of Canada Limited, proposes

only a signalized level crossing at Major Mackenzie if the main entrance is at Rutherford.

Town Solicitor Fraser told the OMB a solution to the underpass question may result from continuing talks among region traffic engineers, the town and the developer.

Hearing Chairman McCrae told the public gallery the OMB will always hear members of the public not represented by legal counsel.

"Every person here is entitled to his day in court. We will listen if there is still something of importance of concern to the public that hasn't been raised," he promised.

Besides the town solicitor, appearing in support of the park plan were: Mrs. J. E. Bradley for York Hamilton Developments Ltd.; J. G. Chipman and J. F. McCallum for Family Leisure Centres.

For Circle Ridge Investments, lawyer Cecil Foret said he expected to support the project.

York Region Solicitor Ted Oakes said he would be arguing conditional approval.

Solicitor for the objectors is John Richardson, representing Maple Ratepayers Assoc. Inc. and Sensible Approach to Vaughan's Environment (S.A.V.E.).

Seat belt charge leads to drug find

A routine police check, in which a motorist was stopped for not wearing his seatbelt, led to the arrest of two men and the confiscation of 1,000 pounds of marijuana, Halloween night in York Region.

According to police, street value of the marijuana is between \$200,000 and \$300,000. Deputy Police Chief Robert Hood commented the work of Police Constables Lorne Patterson, and Don Gambin of 28 Division, Richmond Hill, who pulled a station wagon off the road on Keele St., and found 500 pounds of marijuana in it.

As a result of the find, police then checked a house at Steeles Ave. and Don Mills Rd. in Markham, and came up with another 500 pounds of the drug.

Charged with possession of marijuana for purposes of trafficking, were Gary Boyd, 41 of Notting Hill Rd., Markham, and Richard Kelleher, 44, of Massey Sq. Toronto.

No charges were laid for the lack of seatbelts.

It was the second big drug arrest by York police in the past few days.



Mascot

Roxxie the Dalmation is presented by Sara Gefe Foster to Richmond Hill fire fighter Joe Lefevre. The dog, which lives at the hall while Joe is on duty, is expected to carry out several

public relations functions for the fire fighters. Already Roxxie has greeted and shaken 43 hands of youngsters who toured the hall last week.

Roxxie lives part time at fire hall

"Roxxie" the dalmation may not have a permanent home at the Richmond Hill Fire Department, but it's not because the place is full of animal haters.

Fire Chief Bob Kennedy told The Liberal Monday the new dog may live full time at the new hall now under construction on Major Mackenzie Drive.

Presently, the dog lives at the hall on Wright Street as long as his real owner, Victor (Joe) Lefevre is on duty as a fire fighter.

"It's too busy to keep the dog here all the time," Kennedy said. "There's nowhere for it to run." Roxxie was given to Lefevre by Sara Gefe Foster of Keswick in a brief ceremony last week.

Already, Roxxie has been called on to do public relations work for the fire department.

She shook 43 hands when a class of children toured the building. "Fire dogs are like Santa Claus to kids," Ms. Foster told The Liberal Monday. "They belong to fire departments."

Chief Kennedy agrees, "but not on Wright Street." The department's first dog — Blaze — was hit twice by cars on the busy street.

That dog drowned in a neighbourhood pool last April, after having lived at the fire hall for about a year and a half.

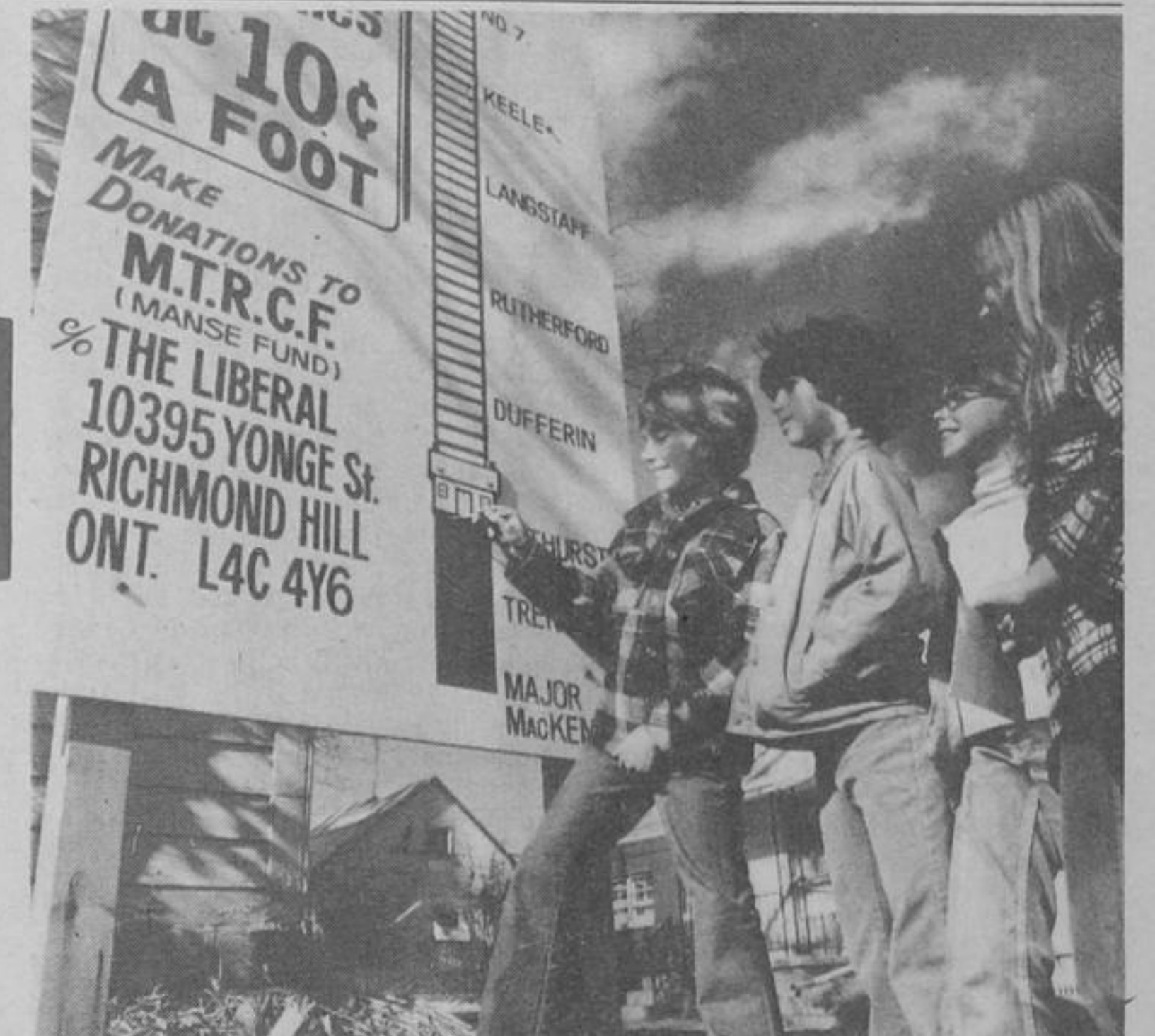
Ms. Foster is confident the dog will receive the best of care from Joe Lefevre and other fire fighters.

"The Richmond Hill Fire Department is known for its

generosity and the way it treats its citizens," she said. "I was never afraid to talk to them, because they had a dog."

In a couple of years, Ms. Foster predicts, the animal "could be known as Roxxie the Wonder Dog of the Richmond Hill Fire Department."

She estimates the dog's training alone is worth between \$1,000 and \$1,500 in donations to the fire fighters major charity, the Muscular Dystrophy Association.



Grade 5 students from McConaghy School in Richmond Hill held a car wash to raise money to help move the Manse to Pioneer Village.

Participating were, left to right, Robert Fayle, Larry Donofrio, Jenny Meal, and Leanne Ambrose, all 10 years old. They raised \$25.30.

Manse inches its way to Pioneer Village

Richmond Hill's Presbyterian Manse is moving again.

Inching its way to a new home at Pioneer Village, the Manse, in money, has moved to "just beyond Bathurst Street", said Dave Fayle, chairman of LACAC (Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee).

The distance is equal to \$878 being raised so far.

"But there's still a long way to go to reach the \$5,800 goal," Fayle said.

Service clubs and other organizations in Richmond Hill and Thornhill are beginning to show interest in the project.

The Richmond Hill Naturalist Club recently approved a donation of \$100. The Grade 5 class at MacConaghy Public School raised \$25.30 with a car wash, enough to move the manse 253 feet.

Send or take your contributions (marked Manse Fund) to The Liberal office, 10395 Yonge Street.

Cheques should be made payable to the MTRCF (Manse Fund).

All donations are tax deductible and official receipts for tax purposes will be issued by the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation.

Legion members ready for service Sunday afternoon

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 375 Richmond Hill will have the Honorable Barney Danson as special guest for its annual Remembrance Day services this

Sunday. Ceremonies will take place at the Yonge Street cenotaph at 3 p.m. unless poor weather forces the service indoors.

In that event, it will be held at the Legion building, 371 Ohio Road.

Mr. Danson will join Lt. Col. H. Tudor, C.D. of Canadian Forces Base, Toronto, in taking the salute during a parade that will follow the service.

Remarks will also be made by Richmond Hill Mayor David Schiller, Rev. Dana Lamb of St. John's Baptist Church, and Rev. Bill Prentice of St. Mary's Anglican Church.

The depositing of the wreaths will be conducted by Regional Councillor Lois Hancey.

This Saturday, beginning at 6:30 p.m. World War I veterans will be entertained — with a dinner and dance at the Legion.

Social guests will be veterans from Sunnybrook in Toronto.

The guest speaker will be Lt. Commander Fred Cox, of Defence and Civil Institute of Environmental Medicine in Downsview.

223 homes for Ridges

By MILLIE STEWART

Construction has begun on a site in Oak Ridges that will eventually be a large subdivision.

Wimpey Construction Company is installing sewers and other services on the land, west of Yonge Street, north of Cashway Lumber Company.

The subdivision, to be known as Beaufort Hills, will be made up of 223 homes.

They will occupy about 160 acres of land.

Construction of the houses is expected to begin next year. They will sit on lots no smaller than 85 feet by 200 feet.

Area residents living on Elmgrove and Gallager Avenues have expressed concern that the new homes would back onto their properties.

However, planners say an 80-acre parcel of land will separate the existing homes from the new subdivision.

While the new houses will have septic systems, the sewers now being constructed will be ready to hook into a major system once it arrives in Oak Ridges.

Provisions have been made in the plans for future parks and a future school.

Children who live in Beaufort Hills will originally attend existing Oak Ridges schools.

Developers have assured residents that surround terrain, including natural waterways and wooded areas will remain untouched, as much as possible.