

Is Halton Hills really open for business?

Town Council is attempting to find a balance between having development, not existing taxpayers, paying for growth and at the same time, having competitive development.

On Monday, politicians are expected to endorse last week's general committee decision to recover 75 per cent of the cost of development, bringing Town coffers \$495,000 of the \$660,000 it will cost to

process development applications this year.

That fee schedule would mean startling increases for some planning fees – the administration fee for final approval of a subdivision/ condominium application would jump 704 per cent to \$2,250 from \$280 and the cost for an Official Plan amendment would increase 107 per cent to \$7,500 from \$3,629.

Only Councillors Jane Fogal and John Day voted against the 75 per cent cost recovery rate, with Fogal arguing they cannot justify having high taxes, high development charges and the highest development fees in the GTA because Halton Hills isn't Nirvana or Hawaii and must be competitive.

Referring to Mayor Gastle's post election claim that Halton Hills is open for

business, Fogal said, "really, it looks more like we're trying to discourage it (growth)."

Mayor Gastle defended the Town's efforts to bring commercial and industrial development to Halton Hills and said, "developers know they have to pay their way," adding they weren't asking for 100 per cent cost recovery.

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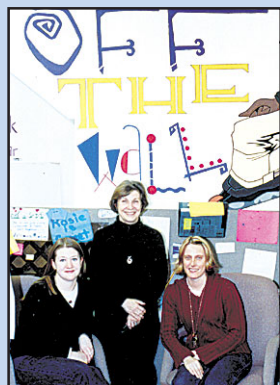
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What's Inside



Trouble travelling on Hwy 407? An Acton man wasn't even on the road and received bills. See Page 3



Acton's Off the Wall has a series of fund raising on tap to keep the youth centre active. See Page 12



The United Way and Salvation Army received generous cheques from an Acton company on Monday. See Page 4

Ambulance station plans unveiled

Unity Church service Sunday

Acton Ministerial Association is sponsoring the tenth annual service to pray for Christian Unity at the Acton Legion hall this Sunday morning, January 19 at 10:30am.

A parallel service for children is being held at neighbouring St. Joseph School starting at 10:15am starring the Rubber Chicken Company with puppets, games, music, fun and stories from children.

The idea of a service for Christian unity goes back as far as 1740 but the formal Week of Prayer in Canada didn't start until 1968 when the Council of Churches and Catholic Bishops wrote international material for Canadian use. An estimated 900 people attended last year's service.



AMBULANCE PLANS: Acton's Cheryl and Bill Beaton like what they saw when Halton unveiled plans for its new ambulance station in Acton at a public meeting at the arena last Wednesday. The Beatons live beside the proposed \$650,000 Churchill Road facility, which is slated to open in May. – Frances Niblock photo

Over 70 residents at water meter meeting

More than 70 Halton Hills residents came out to an open house hosted by Halton Region on Thursday to learn more about how water meters work and how the Region's new replacement program will affect them.

Residents who couldn't make it to the meeting will still receive all of

the information they need to make an appointment to have a new remote-read meter installed.

Over the next four to five months, all Halton Hills households that are due to receive a new meter will have a notice dropped in their mailbox two weeks prior to the installers being in the area. This notice will include a

toll free number to call to arrange a specific appointment date and time.

More information about the program is available on Halton Region's website at www.region.halton.on.ca/ppw/changeout or by calling the program coordinator at 905-825-6000 ext. 7458 / toll free 1-866-442-5866 ext. 7458.

Construction of new station to cost \$650,000

By **FRANCES NIBLOCK**
The New Tanner

A handful of Acton residents who viewed plans for the new Acton ambulance station at a public meeting last Wednesday, liked what they saw.

"This is a positive move for Acton and we welcome this improvement to our neighbourhood," said immediate neighbour Cheryl Beaton who said she likes the "residential" look of the proposed 2,500-square-foot building.

Husband Bill Beaton said Halton quickly answered their concerns about privacy by agreeing to remove a hedge that separates the proposed station and their home and replace it with a fence.

"These two buildings – the ambulance station and fire hall – bring the project to completion and give Acton full emergency services," Bill Beaton said just before a public meeting/ information session at the Acton arena.

The proposed \$650,000 facility, one of three being built by Halton to improve land ambulance services, was designed by the same architect who designed the adjacent fire hall to the north.

It will be constructed with the same materials as the fire station – salmon-coloured brick with a green roof – and will be landscaped to look less like an

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