

Is Halton Hills open...

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Acton and Halton Councillor Rick Bonnette supported 75 per cent recovery based on taxpayer comments that they don't want to pay for growth.

In return for higher fees, Bonnette said the Town should "provide service and streamline," adding for the most part, developers have had a "pretty good

ride" in Halton Hills.

When questioned about input from the development industry, staff said no one commented or came to Council when informed politicians would be discussing a 75 per cent cost recovery, and dealing with a bylaw recommending a 50 per cent minimum rate on January 6.

Bonnette also asked staff

to clarify the impact of the cost recovery rate on the budget and treasurer Ed DeSousa said going to 75 per cent would increase Town revenues by \$165,000.

A vote to endorse the 75 per cent recovery fees at that meeting, and not wait until January 20 for more input and final council approval, lost on a 5-5-tie vote. Voting in favour of immediate approval of the 75 per cent rate were Councillors Ron Chatten, Dobbie Frizzell, Bob Inglis, Bonnette and Mayor Gastle. Those opposed included Moya Johnson, Bryan Lewis, John Day, Joan Robson, and Fogal. Acton councillor Clark Somerville was absent.

Council passed a bylaw with a 50 per cent recovery rate to ensure any development applications dealt with by the Town before final January 20 decision will pay higher fees than the old rates which were last increased in 1999.



FOOD SHARE BENEFITS: Acton Food Share treasurer Eilene Dix and chair Arlene Humphreys accept a cheque for \$1,980 from IGA store manager John Van Dam, the money raised by the IGA store in pre-Christmas donations. - Frances Niblock photo

Unveil plans for amulance...

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institutional building and have a more "friendly neighbourhood look," according to Halton's director of emergency medical services, Jim King, who said the new facility will also help Halton to increase service levels and decrease response times.

Architect Paul MacIntosh said the design of the Acton station would be used as a model for other new stations and that the Churchill Road facility will include a large garage for one ambulance, crew areas with a kitchen and beds and an equipment cleaning and storage area.

The building will also feature a front entranceway that can act as a safe haven for anyone in immediate need of safety, even when crews are not at the station.

Once inside the front door, anyone in danger could lock him or herself in the vestibule and use a telephone to call 911.

"This is kind of an important feature for a residential neighbourhood, for children, for women out at night alone or for

anybody in any circumstance, there is a place where they can find refuge," MacIntosh said.

Acton resident Mike O'Leary suggested the vestibule be equipped with a camera to deter anyone from attempting to get into the station through the vestibule, an issue that will be investigated. Staff also said all drugs at the station would be locked in a vault within a locked cabinet.

Noting it had taken many years of hard work by many people to get 24-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week ambulance service for Acton, Councillor Rick Bonnette said he was "very pleased" with the building of the station, the next step in providing the essential service.

Halton chairman Joyce Savoline said plans to improve service in Acton, and other parts of Halton, began in 2000 when the Region took over responsibility from the province for land ambulance services.

Acton paramedics were moved from their flood prone,

mouldy HQ behind what was then the Becker's store and have been sharing space with the fire department at its Churchill Road station as Halton proceeded with plans to build a new station.

Savoline said the new station supports Halton's efforts to improve service, noting many paramedics in Halton now have advanced care training, allowing them to do more procedures on patients.

"Ambulance service isn't simply a transportation system between home and hospital - this is first touch medical care, so the more experience we put on an ambulance, the better chance that person has," Savoline said.

Construction will begin on the new station before the end of the month and it is slated to open in May.

Halton emergency medical services has 130 paramedics, 27 vehicles and seven stations answering over 40,000 calls a year. Acton ambulance crews answered 1,940 calls for service last year.

Dr. Tim Peloso

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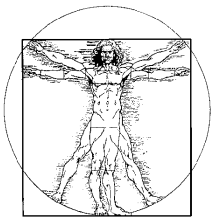
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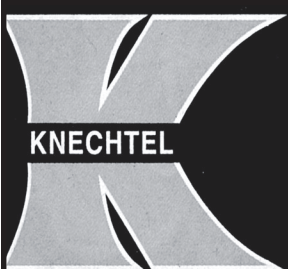
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