

Oakville in year 2000: You may not recognize it

By MICHAEL SHAPCOTT

The Oakville of the year 2000 will be greatly different from the Oakville of today.

In fact, an Oakville resident who leaves this year and comes back in 20 years might not even be able to recognize the community, predicts town long range planner John Walker.

The changes won't be the Buck Rogers stuff of the 1930s — buttons, flashing lights and a gadget for everything — but they will be radical, nonetheless, he says.

Much of the change will come from outside, with such factors as the increasing energy shortage forcing more innovative types of transportation and housing.

Walker says there won't be many more high-rises because those buildings are not energy-efficient.

Instead, there will be an increased number of low-rise developments and more moderate types of housing.

In Oakville of the future, neighborhoods will be geared more to pedestrians and less to roads and other physical services.

Walker believes the town will retain its community charm and avoid the urban blight that sprawls across areas to the east and west. "Oakville is the only community that stops Toronto and Hamilton from becoming another Los Angeles," he says.

Walker sees Oakville becoming more of a self-sufficient community in the coming years. It is a waste of time, energy and human resources to have much of Oakville's population commuting daily to Toronto when their jobs could be done as easily in Oakville.

More offices and more industry, especially in the

areas set aside in the plans for the large Glen Abbey (northwest Oakville) and Clearview (southeast) subdivisions, will bring more jobs to town and ease the commuter crush.

In the meantime, Walker believes that — providing GO Transit puts electric trains on its Lakeshore run — the area around the train station and Cross Avenue will become an increasingly important commercial section of town, a second downtown.

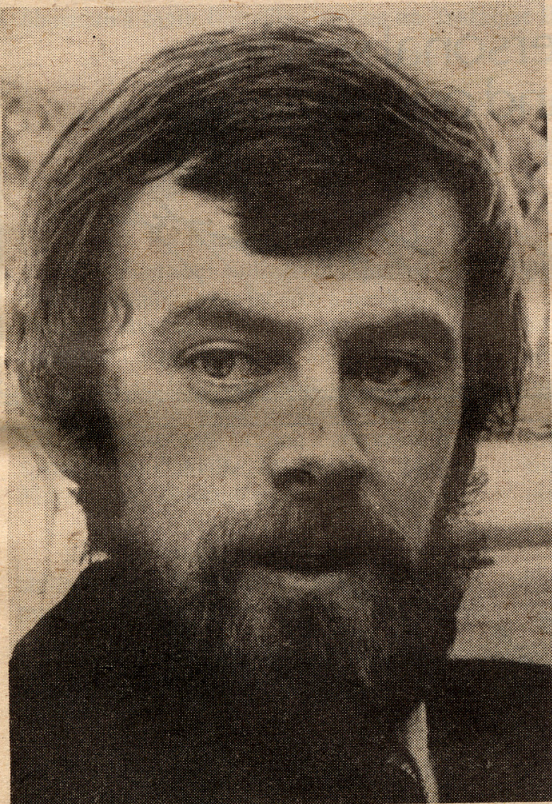
The electric trains would improve GO service and make Oakville much closer to Toronto, says Walker.

Oakville will continue to have various strong neighborhoods, as it does now, such as Bronte to the west, old Oakville in the centre and Falgarwood to the north.

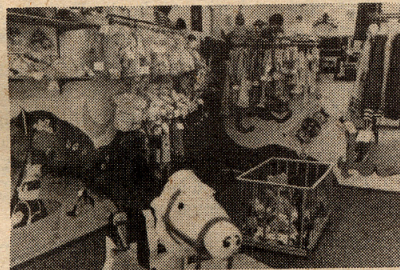
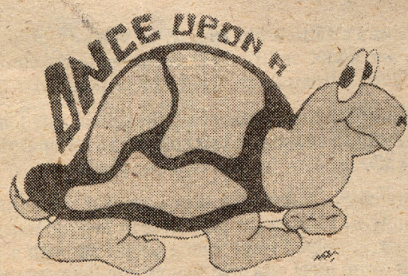
As the energy crisis intensifies, individual homes will have to become more self-sufficient, drawing power from their own plants, perhaps using solar energy.

Sewer systems, which form a major part of residents' tax bills, will be reduced as homes process their own sewage using special toilets.

Oakville has had very prudent management over the years, notes Walker, and the strong attention and interest with planning the community will continue.



Long range planner John Walker



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