

## Board of Education

# Suggest \$923 lot fee

MARKHAM—Whenever one house is built in York County, the debt carried by home owners increases by \$1,373.

This was the message given to representatives of 11 of the county's 14 municipalities when they met with members of the York County Board of Education at Markham District High School February 11. Only King Township, Georgina and Woodbridge were not represented.

This mounting debt will ultimately stop all development. Board Chairman Jack MacKay told the councillors. "We are only trying to be honest with you," he said. "There is only a limited amount of money for capital expenditures. That limit will itself stop development."

Mr. MacKay was answering charges by Aurora Mayor Dick Illingworth that the board's proposal of a \$923 lot fee for educational services would stifle development in the county.

Instead, it was pointed out by another trustee, the board's proposal means that the capital costs of new school construction built to serve new subdivisions would be incorporated in the cost of the new house. They would be paid as part of the mortgage by the new

immigrant to the county instead of by the present homeowners. While this would obviously increase the cost of a new home by about \$1,000, it would make continued new development possible.

The board considered it unfair to newcomers to ask them to pay, as well as the increased costs, a share of present educational debt now being carried by York County residents, which is approximately \$450 on an "average" home with \$5,000 assessment.

This sum was therefore subtracted from the \$1,272 increased cost of school construction per unit, to arrive at the \$923 per lot suggested school board levy.

The board sought support from municipal councils in a request to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Minister of Education for legislation permitting the levying of such a lot fee, similar to that which municipalities levy on all new development to pay for municipal services.

"The money has to come from somewhere. It's as simple as that, fellas", Mr. MacKay told the councillors. "Without some other source of capital funds, we can't build schools to serve all the new subdivisions that are being planned." The board felt,

Mr. MacKay stressed, that it was unfair to present residents of the county to be taxed to pay for schools to serve newcomers, that it would impose an impossible burden, particularly on farmers and those living on a fixed income.

Chief opposition to the board's proposal came from Aurora Mayor Illingworth who insisted that education costs should be taken out of personal income taxes, not the property tax.

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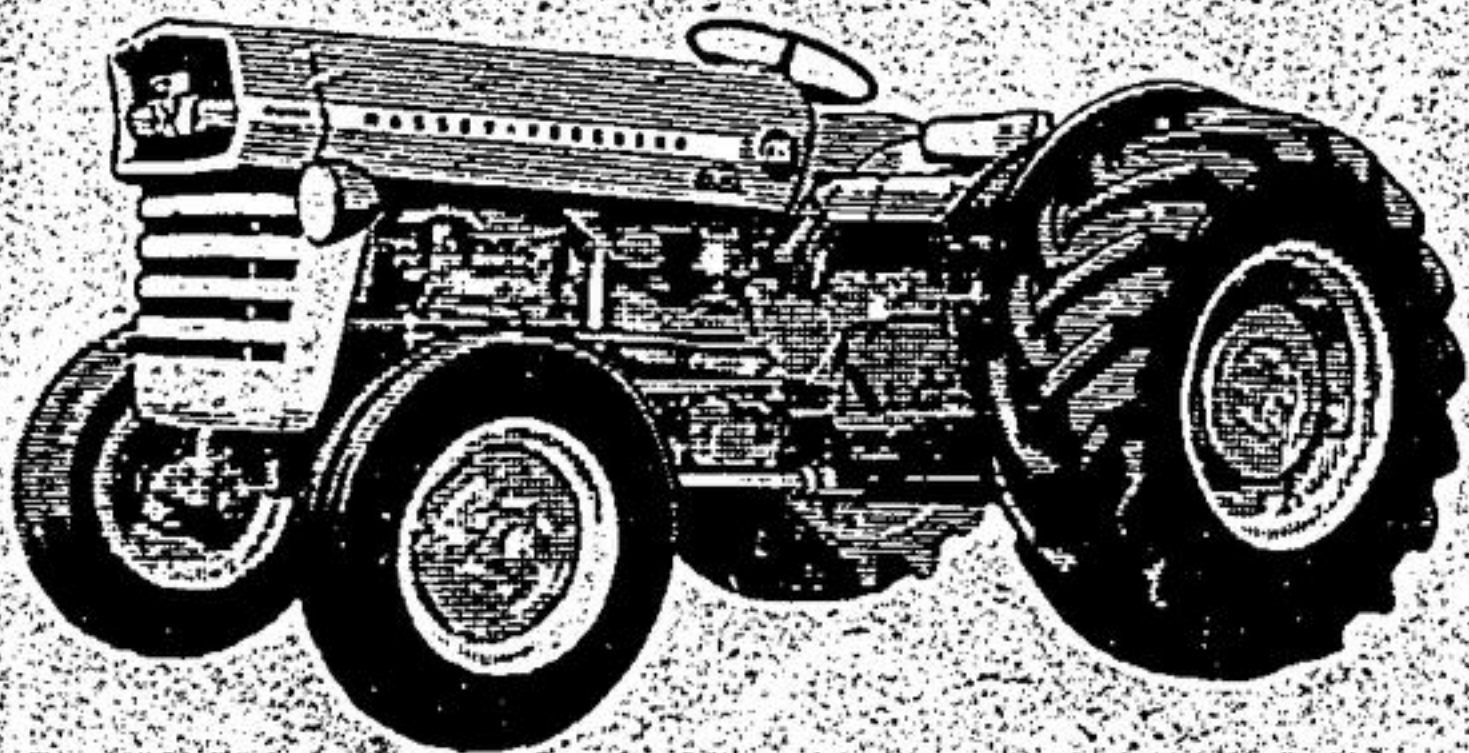


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