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Editorial

Selected airport site is final

The announced site of the long-anticipated airport, is final. The location, on 18,000 acres, in Pickering Township, will not be altered - not one mile, not one inch. And affected residents, despite some understandable concern, even anxiety, should resign themselves to this fact.

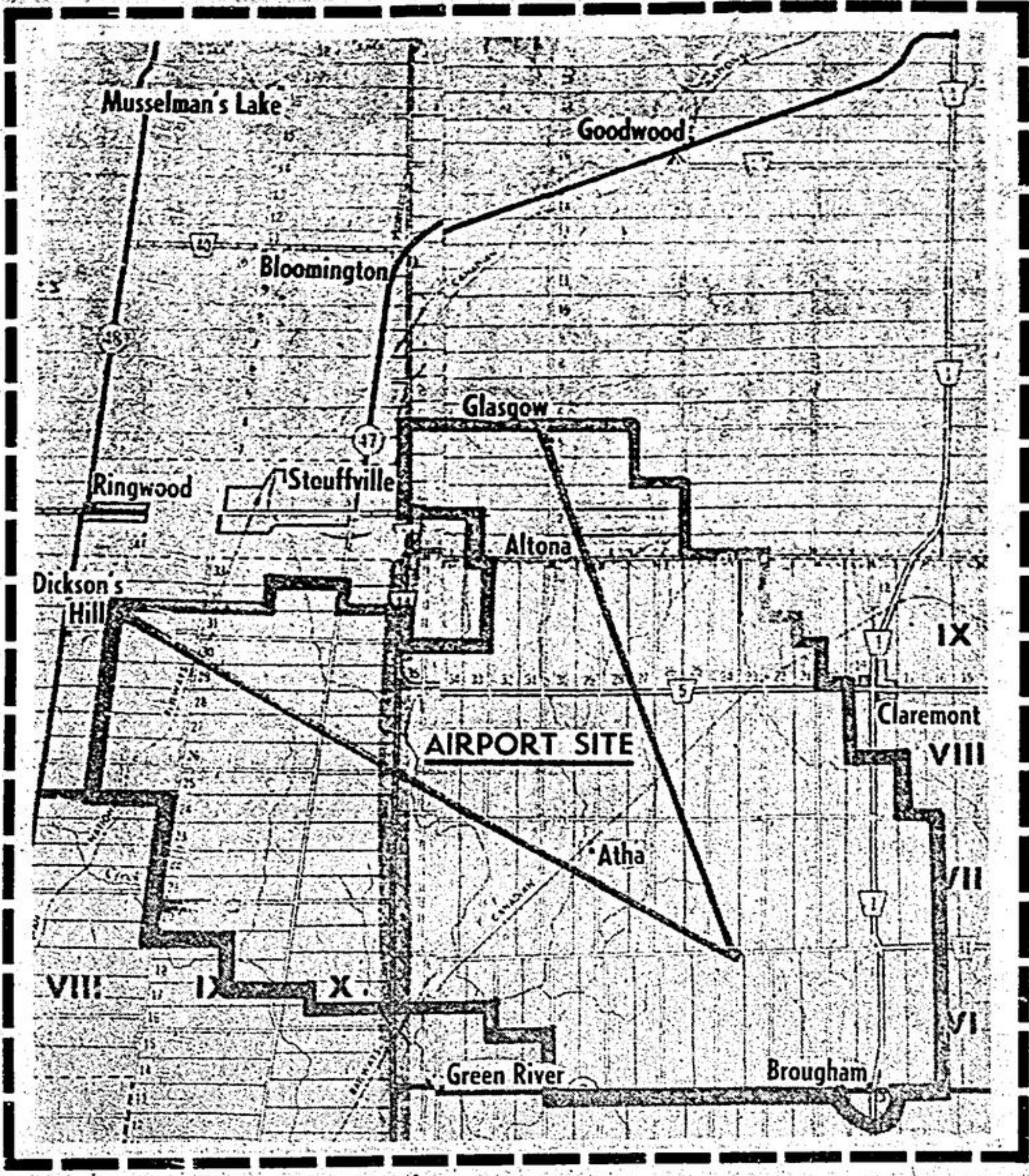
A statement by Queen's Park, released to The Tribune, through M. P. P., Wm. Hodgson (York-North), indicates very clearly the Provincial Government's stand. It reads: "Provincial government officials will meet with people who live in and around the airport site and will do everything possible to take their needs into account. However, the government's first responsibility is to serve the interests of the province as a whole; this the government intends to do. Public hearings will be arranged for people whose land is to be acquired by public agencies. There will be ample opportunity for these people to voice their concerns and have their wishes considered. Again, however, another 'public', whose interests must be considered, are the travellers who will use the airport and need safe, convenient

access to it". Nothing could be clearer. The government, through implementation of its airport plan, will deal with problems that its decision has created. But the solution, in our opinion, will not be found, by moving the site from one municipality into another or from one Riding into another.

For this reason, we feel M.P.P. Bill Newman is only 'whistling in the wind', by lending verbal support to any protest movement, calling for a shift in locations. A similar hue and cry would occur in Uxbridge, in Scott, in Georgina. The truth is, no one wanted it. But Pickering's got it. And they'll have to make the best of it.

We feel, it would be to Mr. Newman's advantage and, to the advantage of the affected constituents he represents, to work towards a satisfactory financial settlement, either through a reduced tax scheme, for those on the fringe, or an acceptable sale price, for those in the centre.

Now is not the time for wailing and gnashing of teeth. It's a time to face up to reality.



Questions - some answers

There are many questions concerning the proposed airport site in Pickering Township. Some of these follow - with answers, as provided by Ontario Government.

Why was this site chosen?

The selection of any airport site in Canada rests primarily with the federal Ministry of Transport and is based on flying characteristics, safety considerations and convenience to the area to be served. At the same time, the Ontario government wanted a location to fit well with its plan for the Toronto-Centred region. Numerous alternatives were considered, and the Pickering Township site was chosen because:

-It is an excellent site, consistent with safety and other aeronautical considerations.

-Of all the proposed sites, it is closest to Toronto, and therefore provides the easiest accessibility.

-It is close enough to Lake Ontario and to several transportation routes so as to keep service costs (water, sewerage, roads) at reasonable levels - lower, in fact, than they would be at any other sites considered.

-No major communities will be seriously affected by expropriation or by noise from the airport.

What impact will the new airport have on towns such as Markham, Stouffville, Richmond Hill, Ajax and Oshawa?

Adjustments to runway alignments will protect both Markham and Stouffville from aircraft noise levels that might bother existing communities. Residents of more distant towns, such as Richmond Hill - will be conscious of planes overhead, but no more so than the people of, say, Toronto are when planes are over the city. Nor will Ajax, Oshawa or other communities to the south experience any noticeable noise. On the other hand, a few villages 'right at the site, such as Brougham, will be included in the land purchased for the airport.

Except for those villages in and around the site, communities in the general vicinity will enjoy an acceleration of the development they hoped for and expected in the immediate years ahead.

What about the people who own land in the area?

Apart from the federal government's purchase of the land for the airport itself, the provincial government considers it essential to buy up all the lands needed to create an efficient, attractive and fully integrated community in the area. To prevent costly inflation of land prices in the area, the government intends to acquire all the land which, in the long run, will benefit both the new community itself and the people of Ontario, as a whole.

To what extent is the province committed to providing highways and other services?

The Ontario government intends to build Highway 407 as an east-west route, several miles north of the Macdonald-Cartier Freeway (401) and parallel to it. Highway 407 will serve the entire urbanized, eastern part of the Toronto-Centred Region. The province also intends to build another freeway running northeast from Toronto. This highway may be started earlier than originally intended, because of the decision to locate the airport in the northeast.

New rapid-transit lines to serve new

urban centres in the area northeast of the city will be constructed. One of these lines would run through Cedarwood, serving the airport and extending to other towns further east.

Meanwhile, the province would make sure that Cedarwood and other surrounding communities are bounded by parklands and other open spaces, not only to provide residents with some pleasant countryside nearby, but to provide land for transportation and other services.

How much will the whole development cost?

Only the federal government can reveal the likely cost of the airport itself. As for surrounding developments, the Ontario government has not yet arrived at complete estimates. Land acquisitions costs are likely to amount to about \$70 million. Development of the new community and services (water, sewerage, access roads) will cost several hundred million additional dollars. These costs are not to be burdens for taxpayers, however; much of the development will be financed by private capital.

Will Cedarwood be developed by the government?

This has yet to be decided. Probably, the province will decide to work in partnership with private developers.

Will Cedarwood feature low-cost housing?

While a new town like this presents an unusual opportunity to help ease the housing situation for low-income families, it does not make sense for any city of this size to be made up entirely of any one kind of housing. A variety of housing is necessary, but the government would certainly like to see a substantial number of dwellings priced at amounts that people of the area can afford. The Ontario government believes that if it is well managed, Cedarwood can achieve housing prices much better than those now prevailing on the market.

Has a plan been designed for Cedarwood?

No; studies have indicated the best locations for major elements, such as industrial and commercial areas (near the airport). Considerably more work is needed yet to produce a detailed plan.

How big will Cedarwood be?

The townsites is about 15,000 acres. Predictions of the ultimate population are difficult, but a likely range is 150,000 to 200,000.

Won't Cedarwood be bothered by airport noise?

No. The main runways lie east-west, well north of the town. An industrial-commercial zone and a service corridor (including a highway) will provide a buffer between the airport and town's residential districts.

What is the timing of the project?

The federal government has said it hopes to have the airport operating by 1978 or early 1979. The provincial government has set the same target date for the first phase of the surrounding development. However, the development is expected to take 10 or 15 years beyond that.

When was this location decided?

Having heard months ago - or even years ago - that discussions about the site were going on, some people may have concluded that the decision was made

ROAMING AROUND

Torn between two choices

By Jim Thomas

An international airport - good or bad? That's what folks keep asking me, and undoubtedly keep asking themselves.

But unfortunately, there is no answer - at least no stock answer. For it depends on the position in life of the individual, and the location of his property.

I toured the site, Saturday. So did hundreds of other people, curiously attracted by the flood of news reports coming out of the area.

But who will benefit from this massive government land grab?

Many farmers will, particularly those nearing an age of retirement and already caught in the grip of a municipal tax mess on one hand, and low produce prices on the other.

A few speculators will, particularly those with sufficient foresight to have acquired acreage at bargain rates.

Who will be hurt by the airport project? The home-owner will, particularly the chap whose only ambition was to enjoy a little piece of country quietness.

The fringe residents will, those families whose properties are just beyond the requirements of the airport site, but still within the high-level nuisance of noise.

But what is my personal opinion of the plan?

Actually, I'm torn between two loves - an intense desire to retain the countryside atmosphere that Stouffville has always known, and an excitement of living in a community that could some day become a crossroads to the world.

There's no denying the fact that to 'bury' productive farmlands, estate-type homes and even whole communities, under great spaghetti strips of asphalt and concrete is, on the surface at least, an unforgivable sin. However, the price to gain this end, can be, and often is, more revolting still. It's a thing called 'expropriation', a practice that stirs feelings of contempt within the most docile of minds. It's simply 'like it or lump it', no more, no less. Few like it.

As for Stouffville itself, the direct benefits seem minimal. We'll be located on the 'tail end' of the project, with the main growth area extending from No. 7 Hwy. south. While we may possibly gain a motel or two, these advantages will be more than offset by jet noise and increased traffic.

At this stage, for me at least, I'd like to see the town - and the area around it, stay the way it is.

But then, on the positive side, there's something about aeroplanes and airports that intrigue me.

As a kid, the Spitfire of World War II, was the greatest thing going - even out-gunning Barbara Ann Scott for picture space on my bedroom wall.

Later, came the Wellington, the Lancaster, the Lightning and the Mosquito. I knew them all.

More than thirty years have since passed, but I've never lost interest in the speed, the power and the beauty of these hand-crafted metallic 'birds'. I could stand for hours on the observation deck at Malton, or just sit and watch the world go by from the waiting room or restaurant. To merely rub elbows with a pilot or a passenger from another country or continent, holds some kind of personal thrill.

If that's what's in store for Stouffville, then the alternative to peace and quiet may not be so repulsive after all.

My wife warns, however, that if my selectivity of airport scenes is no more accurate than my choice of airport sites, then the stewardess styles of 1979 will have reverted back to maxi-skirts and grandma boots.

Just my luck.

long ago. Actually, the decision - culminating in agreement between the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario - was reached very recently. Until then, both governments were weighing alternatives to make sure that the final decision would yield the best possible results.

Does the choice of this site call for reorganization of the municipalities in this area?

Because of the scale of the project and the drastic changes that will occur in the pattern of development, reorganization of local governments will probably be necessary at some stage.

Noise - our most pressing problem

With runways only three miles distant, the nuisance of noise will be Stouffville's most pressing problem, with respect to the proposed international airport, in neighboring Pickering Township.

While, according to authorities, the takeoff 'strips' will be so designed as to reduce the noise level over town, both John Roberts and Bill Hodgson, federal and provincial members (York-North), honestly admit that with the site so close, there is no positive solution.

Like gravel trucks and train whistles, it's something we'll have to learn to live with.

We would suggest, however, that as soon as Town Council has had sufficient time to assess all aspects of the project,

that a meeting be arranged with government officials to learn just what impact the over-all plan will have on this municipality.

Right now, residents have adopted a 'wait and see' attitude.

This, however, should not be the policy of Council. For the magnitude of the project is too massive, too all-encompassing, to simply proceed on its own, without first-hand knowledge of what the future has in store.

With proper planning, the airport could indeed prove a benefit to Whitchurch-Stouffville. This should be Council's goal. And the time to establish priorities is now.

Strikers versus the public

It's a safe bet that Saturday night several million Canadians, including several thousand in Stouffville, longed to be able to push a button that would have fired all the CBC technicians who were denying them one of the highlights of their weekend pleasure, N.H.L. hockey.

It is no surprise that the government is already studying new legislation which will curb unions from upsetting national services such as communications, transportation and others.

The situation has become ridiculous when a handful of workers can interfere with the public all across the country and such actions should cease to be tolerated. These workers are striking against the

Canadian people, not some private company. It is interesting to note that Canada has now attained the worst record for strikes of any western nation.

The ire of the people is rising and the support of the vast majority is assured behind any government that will introduce legislation to squelch such actions as we had Saturday.

It's regrettable that in every aspect of these conflicts it is John Public who pays the shot. He suffers all the hardships and interference of having his services break down and in the end he pays the higher wages the union forces out of the government as well as the inflation which the action has caused in other services.

Editor's Mail

Dear Sir:

Your editorial of February 3rd has come to my attention and I appreciate that you are entitled to express your opposing viewpoint on our application to remove the agent and close the station in Stouffville. I suggest you might have added for the information of your readers that the agent is left without meaningful work; that commercial interest will be better served through our Servocentre concept, and that the railway has no intention whatsoever of leaving passengers at Stouffville without adequate shelter.

But I submit that it's a bit much when you state categorically "It is a known fact, that from the very start, the C. N. R. was an unwilling partner in the Stouffville-Toronto commuter program..."

We at CN know of no such "fact". And notwithstanding whatever "fact" you obtained from sources other than CN, I suggest you measure that "fact" against our inauguration of the service with enthusiasm, advertising and improved equipment vis-avis the former one-way run to Markham.

In other words, I think it is both misleading and unfair of your editorial writer to distort CN's position in the matter of suburban rail passenger service. My colleagues and I strongly object to this misrepresentation.

Our senior officers have repeatedly stated (publicly) CN's view that rail passenger service in commuter areas and on inter-city runs may very well prove their economic worth to communities and to governments at the provincial and federal levels. However, there is no known way in which the operators can make such runs viable without subsidies from the social sector or sectors which benefit from the service.

And I appreciate that you are fully capable of rationalizing the rail passenger position in relation to subsidization granted to highway and airway carriers.

Let me again emphasize: CN is indeed willing to become a partner in rail passenger commuter programs. That's a fact!

John C. No. 1
Manager