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Novæ Res Urbis

GREATER TORONTO AREA EDITION

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2004 • VOL 7 • No 48

GTТА PROMISES MADE AND DELAYED

Liberals appear trapped by governance structure

By Anne Marie Aikins

It's been a little over a year since premier **Dalton McGuinty**, during his Throne Speech, expressed his government's commitment to establishing a **Greater Toronto Transportation Authority**. A variety of ministers, including transport minister **Harinder Takhar**, infrastructure minister **David Caplan** and finance minister **Greg Sorbara**, regularly confirm the Liberal's mandate to "reduce gridlock and ensure smooth flow of goods and people across the GTA" by establishing a regional transportation authority.

The announcement pleased the **Urban Development Institute** because they said the plan would help "improve public transit, reduce gridlock and improve air quality." But, the long delay has its president **Neil Rodgers** worried that the Liberals have fallen into the same trap as the previous government.

"The government seems to be caught trying to figure out the most difficult piece – governance," he said. "There will be people will their feathers ruffled. But, just do it. Get it going and the co-operation will eventually come."

Rodgers said that MTO has been conducting "facilitated, private stakeholder consultations," which he is required to keep confidential. But, he could say that the ministry received a "cross section of advice" and though transit and transportation expansion has been underway, he doesn't understand why there has been such a delay in setting up a regional authority.

continued page 4

OSHAWA COUNCIL VOTE THEMSELVES HEFTY PAY INCREASE

Move comes as city workers vote to strike

By Anne Marie Aikins

At a special meeting of council on November 23, **Oshawa** councillors voted to raise their base salaries of \$23,500 to \$32,800, one-third of which is tax free, and to give local councillors representing two city wards an additional 50 per cent increase. Councillors gave themselves the raise retroactive to July 1, 2004 without the necessary legislative changes. But, councillors won't get the extra cash until the by-law comes to council strategically timed to arrive after an agreement has been ratified with city workers.

The timing "couldn't be more offensive" says **CUPE Ontario** president **Sid Ryan** as municipal workers in the City of Oshawa set to vote on a tentative agreement today.

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COMING UP

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 1

Durham Region Council, 9:30 a.m.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 2

Annual OPPI GTA Winter Social, Courtyard by Marriott, downtown Toronto, 6:00 – 10:00 p.m., 416-941-5904.

Going Global Workshop, An introduction to international marketing, Toronto Board of Trade, Metro Hall, 55 John Street, meeting room #309, 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.

FRIDAY DECEMBER 3

Competitive Cities: John Furlong, Vancouver 2010 organizing committee, Toronto Board of Trade, Downtown Centre, 7:45 – 9:00 a.m.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 7

Transportation and Children Workshop, featuring Toronto's medical officer of health Dr. David McKeown and John Burke, deputy minister of municipal affairs and housing, Centre for Sustainable Transportation, Mississauga Living Arts Centre, 4141 Living Arts Drive in Mississauga, 905-858-9242.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 8

Hamilton Council, 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 9

Peel Region Council, 9:30 a.m.

TUESDAY DECEMBER 14

Meet Toronto's New Chief Planner, breakfast sponsored by CUI and NRU, The Arts and Letters Club, 14 Elm Street, 7:45 – 9:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 15

Halton Region Council, 9:30 a.m.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 16

York Region Council, 9:30 a.m.

Greenbelt Seminar, GTHBA, Sheraton Parkway, Richmond Hill, 7:30 a.m., 416-391-3445.

ROOFER MADNESS

Using empty space to save money and the environment

Four green entrepreneurs and designers will “shout from the rooftops” on December 9 at a seminar to describe all the creative, affordable and eco-friendly things that can be done with an empty roof.

Sponsored by the **Coalition for a Green Economy and Grassroots Environmental Products**, the workshop will hear from award-winning architect **Martin Liefhebber**, who will bring photos of green roofs and rooftop gardens he has built over the years. Liefhebber designed and lives in the **CMHC “Healthy House” in Toronto**.

Greg Allen from Sustainable EDGE Ltd. will begin the workshop giving an overview of the various uses for roofs such as sod, water collection and solar panels.

Alex Winch from Mondial Energy will talk about his most recent invention – a solar laundromat” – and how sales of photovoltaic panels are “going through the roof.” Winch has fitted his laundromat's south facing flat roof, which has no obstruction to the sun, with solar thermal panels to heat the water used in his washing machines.

The glycol-filled pipes go from his basement all the way to the roof to eight solar panels. The project, which recently won him a trip to Germany to receive an award, is

completely self-designed and was installed for \$44,000. It should pay itself off in just four years and also received several awards from the **Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment**.

David Katz from Sustainable Resource Management Inc. will explain why his sales of “daylighting equipment” are looking up. Daylighting by **Natural Lighting Co. Inc.**, an Arizona-based company, is a state of the art method of filling a room with well diffused sunlight allowing artificial light systems to be turned off.

Katz told *NRU* that he is bringing the energy conserving technology to Canada. The daylighting system uses solar-powered sun-tracking mirrors to redirect sunlight into a reflective light well and onto a diffusing lens. It provides a building's interior with high levels of well-diffused light, up to an average of 10 hours per day on sunny and bright cloudy days.

Workshop organizer **Michael Berger** told *NRU* that he hopes the opportunity will help individuals, companies, community groups, business associations, and government agencies find ways to improve their environmental performance and “think outside the box.”

The free workshop takes place on December 9 at Toronto City Hall in committee room 2 at 7:30 p.m. •

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NOVÆ RES URBIS
GREATER TORONTO AREA

Musings on the mandate of the GTTA

By Blake Eligh

With no news from the province, there's plenty of speculation about how a **Greater Toronto Transportation Authority** could shape up.

Transit consultant **Richard Gilbert** told *NRU* that whatever the new authority looks like, it needs to be a regional authority with the power to raise funds, oversee co-ordination of services and manage the budget.

"You need an agency that raises money for public transportation, co-ordinates and generally puts the profile and strategy at a higher level," he said.

Gilbert would like to see the authority have the power to have a say in density and planning discussions at the local planning level, too. "It's not the power to compel," Gilbert says. "But the power to withhold." The transportation authority could push a municipality to require increased densities in return for transit projects, such as the proposed subway extension to York University.

"You need a hard-nosed agency with clout to ensure that the conditions are there for the development to happen," he said.

But the power he would most like to see granted to the proposed authority is the ability to "disincentivize" the automobile. Gilbert points to Quebec's annual licence fee, which directs a portion into public transit projects, or London's zone licencing system, which charges a premium to drive in congested areas. He would also like the new authority to have oversight of roads and road budgets.

"These ideas are controversial," Gilbert admits. "But

it can be like throwing cash into a well if you don't restrict the car."

Whether or not these powers are granted to the transportation authority remains to be seen. Gilbert says that so far, the government has been "moderately courageous" in its approaches to energy, planning and health issues. "I think they might go further than people might suppose. How far, I'm not sure," he said. •

Lessons from the Netherlands

Canadian Urban Institute guest panellist **Jeroen Kok** has experienced firsthand the monumental task of getting everyone on board a multi-jurisdiction transit project.

The chair of **Trans Link Systems** told the crowd about his experiences getting 15 national, regional and municipal transit operators and 19 public authorities to agree to one centrally-regulated integrated fare system in the **Netherlands**.

Kok said that the endeavour, which began in 2002 and is to be fully implemented by 2007, escaped gridlocked decision-making with common sense. "Good is good enough," Kok said. "Don't reinvent the wheel. Make quick decisions and just get your project going."

GTA IN BRIEF

FCM meets with cabinet

The national board of directors of the **Federation of Canadian Municipalities** meets December 1-4 in Ottawa to discuss the need for a new deal for Canada's cities and communities with MPs and cabinet ministers.

Housing consultations begin

Due to the short notice given by the housing ministry, the Ontario government has now revised its schedule for consultations over the

next few weeks on a Provincial Affordable Housing Strategy. The one-day consultation workshops will discuss issues such as: target groups for an affordable housing strategy; supportive housing; housing allowances; government lands; financing and mortgage insurance; as well as some design of the three components of the program.

Support for immigrants in labour market

A new mentoring program that matches skilled immigrants with

established professionals, who share the same occupation, was launched this week at a meeting of the **Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council**. The partnership is an alliance of community agencies and corporate partners who will provide occupation specific mentoring to skilled immigrants in the **City of Toronto**, **Peel Region** and **York Region**.

The federal human resources ministry will provide the **Maytree Foundation** with \$900,000 to fund the mentoring partnership.

“The province doesn’t know what they want a GTTA to do,” said **Toronto Transit Commission** chair **Howard Moscoe**, a **Toronto** councillor. “The Liberals made the announcement, but then they woke up in neverland and realized what kind of massive planning nightmare they were proposing and don’t know how they’ll make it happen.”

“The transport ministry is still moving forward on establishing a transportation authority,” said Takhar’s

communication advisor **Danna O’Brien**. “This is a priority for the minister, but an announcement won’t be today.”

Transport assistant deputy minister **Bruce McCuaig** told *NRU* a month ago that an announcement would be made “any day now,” but O’Brien now says not to expect word before the end of the year.

Before Christmas? *NRU* asked O’Brien. “No,” she said.

“If current growth trends continue over the next 30 years,” McCuaig, who works in the policy, planning and standards division, said at a recent transit conference, “the Greater Golden Horseshoe will experience increased gridlock resulting in 45 per cent longer commuting times. A Greater Toronto Transportation Authority is one of the key elements of successful regional planning.” (*See NRU November 3, 2004.*)

The premier’s office spokesperson **Priya Saughisaid** told *NRU* that MTO spoke for McGuinty on the subject of the GTTA.

“For the past three years, the Urban Development Institute has advocated that in order to continue to keep Ontario competitive and offer a high quality of life, an integrated and seamless transit system is essential,” said Rodgers. “It is important to recognize that transportation (roads) and transit integration is critical to ensure that the system is working in harmony.”

The **Toronto Board of Trade** has also supported the government’s commitment to a regional transportation authority as long as it has the

“legislative power and financial resources” within an adequate, commercially-oriented governance structure.

“Over the past year, the government has repeatedly stated its support for a regional transportation authority, although concrete steps have yet to be taken to realize it,” said chair **Phil Evans**. “In the meantime, gridlock and urban sprawl have increased. We strongly urge the province to act without further delay.”

Emna Dhahak from MTO also called to reiterate that the minister has “no timetable at this point” for establishing a GTTA.

“The minister is currently consulting with stakeholders to gather feedback,” she said. “But, when we will announce a start-up is unknown.” •

“If current growth trends continue over the next 30 years, the Greater Golden Horseshoe will experience increased gridlock resulting in 45 per cent longer commuting times.”

- Bruce McCuaig



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Housing report card released

Hundreds of homeless people, low-income tenants and housing advocates arrived in buses from the GTA and other locations for a rally for social housing at the federal-provincial-territorial housing

ministers' national summit in **Gatineau** this week. The **National Housing and Homelessness Network**, one of the sponsors of the event, used the opportunity to release its latest national housing report card.

"The good news is that more than 10,000 new homes have been built

since the Affordable Housing Framework Agreement was signed in November of 2001," said co-chair **Michael Shapcott**. "The bad news is that progress is painfully slow and the nation-wide affordable housing crisis continues to grow worse."

Oshawa council continued from page 1

Wage parity with neighbouring municipalities is the main outstanding issue and the members are prepared to strike on Thursday, Ryan said, if a fair deal can't be worked out.

Mayor **John Gray** is in total agreement.

"This is a huge setback," Gray told *NRU*. "It is ill-advised and there is no justification. It doesn't help in our contract negotiations – to convince our city workers to hold the line while we give huge raises to city councillors, who are part-time employers receiving the equivalent of \$60,000 per year in salary. It will throw all of our hard work out the window and I will not support it."

The surprise motion rose out of a special in-camera meeting, which was scheduled to "consider confidential personnel matters," by wards 1 and 3 councillor **Mike Nicholson**.

Nicholson also moved that staff be "directed to prepare the necessary amendments to the by-law, to enact changes to council remuneration and benefits; and that presentation of the by-law be tabled until ratification of the collective agreement for CUPE Local 250" – the union representing city workers.

Council also voted to give themselves the same retirement allowance package adopted by the **Region of Durham**, and gave an additional annual sum of \$3,250 to the deputy mayor and committee chairs retroactive to

December 1, 2003.

"All municipalities have by-laws regulating salaries," said city manager **Bob Duigan**. "But, it is fully within the liberties of council to consider increases to compensation if there are changes to their responsibilities. Staff were not asked to prepare a report and had no input whatsoever – it's purely a political decision."

The decision cannot take effect, Duigan said, until the by-law is put before council at its meeting December 6.

"Oshawa councillors should not be giving final approval to an exorbitant pay raise for themselves without holding public hearings or they risk creating a negative labour relations environment," Ryan told *NRU*. "Giving themselves a raise of more than 30 per cent at the same time as they are settling with city workers in the range of 3 per cent is absolutely outrageous."

"What's good enough for the workers should be good enough for council," he said. •

"Staff were not asked to prepare a report and had no input whatsoever – it's purely a political decision."

- Bob Duigan

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DURHAM

First Pro proposes expansion of Oshawa mall

Oshawa's development services committee has referred a First Pro mall expansion proposal back to staff. **First Professional Shopping Centres** has applied to add 165,000-sq. ft. to the **Harmony Centre** at **Taunton** and **Harmony** roads. The expansion would add several new buildings, bringing the total commercial floor space to 753,000-sq.ft. The 9.5-ha. expansion is the last of the available land on the site, and would make the mall the biggest First Pro mall in **Durham Region**.

Study to consider Oshawa parks, culture, recreation and open spaces

Over the next 12 months, **Whitby** will develop a new culture, parks, recreation and open space master plan. A public meeting is scheduled December 8 to consider changes to the 18-year-old existing master plan. The study, by **dmA Planning and Management Services**, is to develop strategic directions to guide the town for the next decade. A telephone survey, workshops and focus groups are to be scheduled to identify needs, issues and priorities.

HALTON

Halton enters private/public corridor plan

Halton Region council has approved a "creative financing plan" designed to bring water and wastewater services to the employment lands known as the Halton Hills 401 corridor. The public/private partnership involves the **Town of Halton Hills**, **Mold-Master Ltd.**, **Hopewell Development (Ontario) Ltd.**, **Lawrence Avenue Group 2000 Inc.**, **P.A.Z. Properties Corp.**, and **John and Anne Zdunic**.

The financing plan builds on the region's initial investment of \$26 million in water and wastewater infrastructure as part of the *Halton Urban Structure Plan*, which will open up more than 500 acres of employment lands along the 401 corridor in **Milton** and Halton Hills. Halton

Public meeting for Burlington shale quarry

Halton staff recommends a January public information meeting to consider an application by **Hanson Brick Ltd.** for site plan, rezoning and regional official plan amendment. Hanson also proposes an amendment to the *Parkway Belt West Plan* to permit a new shale quarry in the **City of Burlington**. The joint agency review team is to issue a report with recommendations pending input from the environment ministry.

Special meeting to consider North Oakville land

At a special meeting on Thursday, **Oakville's** planning and development council will consider staff responses and recommendations to issues raised in the *North Oakville Secondary Plans Issues Response* report. The report deals with preliminary plans for the development of land in **North Oakville**. It refers to a recent provincial decision to protect **Ontario Realty Corporation** property from development and issues concerning the implementation of the related natural heritage system.

YORK

Public meeting for Whitchurch-Stouffville arts centre

The **Ventin Group Architects** will present findings from a study of a proposed cultural and arts centre for the Old Town Hall building at a public meeting on December 6. The **Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville**

retained **Ventin** to develop a concept and business plan for the heritage-designated building at **19 Civic Avenue**.

Shefman wins Thornhill by-election

Thornhill residents have elected **Alan Shefman** as the new Ward 5 councillor in **Vaughan**. Thirteen candidates ran in the by-election to replace **Susan Kadis** who was elected MP last June. Shefman won 1,267 votes; his closest opponent garnered 947 out of a total of 4,446 votes.

Apotex expansion complete

Apotex Inc. (formerly **Novex Pharma**) has completed the expansion of its **Richmond Hill** facility. With 650 employees and a 300,000-sq.ft facility, Apotex is the town's single largest private sector employer.

Food distributor relocates to Richmond Hill

Nishimoto Trading Co. Ltd. recently announced that it will relocate its head office to **Richmond Hill**. The distributor of Asian food products is to expand its operations to include kitchenware, cosmetics and other household products. The company plans to build a 45,000-sq. ft. facility in the **Beaver Creek Business Park**. •

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GTA DEVELOPMENT NEWS

DURHAM

Weldon Lands townhouse application

Weldon Lands Inc. and the estate of **A. Tayas** have submitted draft plan of subdivisions and rezoning applications to permit 42 townhouses at **542 Kingston Road**, west of **Rosebank Road** in **Pickering**.

Rose Valley subdivision application

Rose Valley Homes and **John Perdue** have submitted a draft plan of subdivision to permit one subdivision block for future development at **1355-1361 Altona Road**, north of **Kingston Road** in **Pickering**. The site is zoned for business, office, professional and multiple-residential uses.

Fairport Road residential development

R&D Investments Inc. has submitted a rezoning application to permit nine single-detached dwellings at **1741 Fairport Road**, south of **Dunbarton Road** in **Pickering**.

HALTON

John Street apartment applications

Region of Peel Housing & Property has submitted official plan and zoning amendment applications to permit a 17-storey, 200-unit apartment building at **10-12, 16-20 and 21 John Street**, east of **Main Street South** in **Brampton**.

Nortonville townhouse applications

Nortonville Estates Limited has submitted official plan and zoning amendment applications to permit 15 townhouses on the south side of **Vodden Street East**, between **Lone Oak Avenue** and **Laurelcrest Street** in **Brampton**.

Candevcon residential lots

Candevcon (Ryan Homes) has submitted draft plan of subdivision and rezoning applications to permit nine single-detached residential lots and 40 lots for future development on the south side of **Countryside Drive**, southwest of **Airport Road** in **Brampton**.

Bold Oak retail and drive-through applications

Bold Oak Estates Corporation has submitted official plan and rezoning applications to permit a 1,627-sq.m. commercial building and a 223-sq. m. drive-through restaurant at the southwest corner of **Cottrelle Boulevard** and **Regional Road No. 50** in **Brampton**.

PEEL

Change of use for Mississauga Road site

Select Properties Limited has submitted official plan and zoning amendment applications to permit industrial, warehouse and manufacturing uses at **7370 Mississauga Road**, north of **Meadowvale Boulevard** in **Mississauga**.

Goreway Drive apartment applications

Nanak Holdings Limited has submitted official plan and zoning amendment applications to permit two seven-storey apartment buildings with a total of 147 units at **7405 Goreway Drive**, north of **Morning Star Drive** in **Mississauga**.

Townhouse applications for Warwickshire Way

Abbiadori Developments Inc. (Greenpark Homes) has submitted official plan and zoning amendment applications to permit 42 townhouses at **5037 Warwickshire Way**, northwest of **Eglinton Avenue West** and **Terry Fox Way** in **Mississauga**.

YORK

Non-conforming accessory building application

Friederike Bental has submitted an application for permission to enlarge a non-conforming use. Bental seeks permission for an 850-sq. ft. accessory building at **13288 McCowan Road**, north of **Bethesda Side Road** in **Whitchurch-Stouffville**.

Kennedy Road severance proposal

Stella Yusko has submitted an application for consent to convey land at **11726 and 11822 Kennedy Road**, north of **19th Line** in **Whitchurch-Stouffville**. Yusko proposes to sever 39.6-ha., fronting onto **Kennedy Road**, for agricultural purposes. She proposes to retain 40.3-ha., also fronting onto **Kennedy Road**.

continued page 8

ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD NEWS

Self-storage units exempt from DCs

In a decision issued November 22, board member **Susan Rogers** allowed the appeal by **Airport Self Storage Limited** against a development charge imposed on **425 Taunton Road West** in **Oshawa**.

Airport Self Storage appealed against the development charges levied by **Durham Region**. The appellant is building a self-storage facility that includes an office, a residence for a 24-hour security person and a series of rental self-storage units. The appellant paid commercial development charges for the office component of the development, and residential development charges for the residence without complaint, but appealed against commercial development charges applied to the square footage of the development that was to be used for storage purposes. Airport Self Storage claimed that the storage portion should be exempt from the charges because it should be considered an industrial use.

The region argued that storage units are commercial uses and fall within the broad definition of commercial retail uses.

The board noted that the concept of self-storage facilities was recent in terms of planning and development. It found there was no common classification for the use, which was variously classified as industrial or commercial. In the decision, the board made reference to a background study for development charges which calculated self-storage uses according to industrial development, for which the region does not levy development charges. The policies that excluded industrial uses from the development charge by-law were not articulated in any background study or staff report.

Both parties agreed that the self-storage facility did not constitute an office use, but debated whether or not it could be considered a retail use. Self-storage is not included in the by-law's list of defined retail uses.

The region argued that self-storage operations provide a rental service and fall within the "ordinary meaning" of the by-law's definition of "retail use." It gave the opinion that the facility could be considered commercial as residential-based customers were the primary user of the operation.

The board said it could not rely on the "ordinary meaning" of the definition, which it said could create ambiguity. The board said that the traditional view of storage or warehousing holds that it is an industrial use, and that the activity in the space—in this case, storage—should define how the operation is classified.

The board said that the users of the operation were not limited to residential customers, and would, in any case, likely change over time. Without a definition in the by-law, the board found that the character of the building and the activity in the space to be rented out was the best indication of the nature of the business activity.

While the board acknowledged that "precision cannot be fully required or expected," it said that the charges imposed by the by-law had to be supported by the development charge study underlying the by-law.

It allowed the appeal and ordered the region to refund \$119,241 plus interest to the appellant.

Solicitor **Lynda Townsend-Renaud (L. Townsend-Renaud Law Offices)** represented Airport Self Storage Limited. Solicitor **Andrew Allison** represented **Durham Region**. (*See OMB Case No. DC030012.*) •

GTA DEVELOPMENT NEWS

continued from page 7

Loblaw applications for Major Mackenzie Drive

Loblaw Properties Limited has submitted official plan and zoning amendment applications to permit a 30,626-sq. m., 12-building retail development on the north side of **Major Mackenzie Drive**, between **Woodbine Avenue** and **Highway 404** in **Markham**. The project includes a proposed Loblaw grocery store, other retail

establishments, offices and two gas bars. The proposal for the two large-format stores exceeds current official plan size caps. The proposed amendment includes provision to allow service stations and car washes. The zoning amendment would delete the agricultural zoning for the property and replace it with commercial and industrial zoning. •

GTA PEOPLE

Etobicoke MP **Jean Augustine** was appointed special advisor for Grenada by the Prime Minister .

Former **Halton Region** assistant corporate counsel **Monica Wallenfels** has been appointed regional clerk.