



Sid Rodaway

Condos need more 'soul'

Peel regional council is expected to recommend that the Ontario government amend its condominium legislation to encourage greater owner participation in maintaining and beautifying their condo homes.

That should prove to be a good move but legislators who believe that reduced condominium maintenance fees will be the making of increased owner participation in the upkeep of their homes are making a mistake.

Mississauga Mayor Ron Searle came close to the mark when he told a regional planning committee that using professionals to carry out basic maintenance on the exteriors of their condominium homes cheats them of the unifying family experience of working together around the house.

He said it was "soul-destroying" when a 60-year-old semi-retired man cuts the lawn while a 25-year-old couple stretch out on a chaise longue.

Condominium was not "invented" as a means of reducing the work load. While that is most definitely a side benefit of the con-

dominium style of living, it is the increased affordability of these housing units that made them so popular. That went for Rome 2,000 years ago and it goes for Mississauga today.

Unfortunately the concept has been sold here with emphasis placed on the reduced work load. That may be fine for the retired couple or the family with a unique life style that allows few leisure moments at home, but it is an essentially destructive force that reduces even further the family's commitment to home and community.

The cliché of the uninvolvement and unconcerned apartment tenant is all too true. The minimal demands placed on the resident of a high rise do not improve their lifestyle, they isolate it. And it is in this atmosphere of isolation that vandalism, marital break-up and moral decay takes place.

All too often the first-time owners of condominiums are former rental tenants who bring with them their tenant mentality. As a result the sense of private property, the pride in ownership and the built in commitment to the larger community can often be absent.

This isolationism is a cultural habit particularly strong in the North American mobile society. I remember visiting one family in a high rise apartment on the outskirts of The Hague in Holland. Neatly trimmed six foot tall hedges ringed the apartment's beautifully cared for rose garden.

Of course I assumed that the caretaker was responsible for this lovely floral display but my host was quick to point out that it was created and cared for by the tenants. He insisted that tenants vie for the "privilege" of tending the garden each week and explained that this was the everyday expression of the Dutch culture's commitment to the soil.

Increased personal responsibilities for condominium owners here can only be expected to reduce monthly maintenance fees by a minimal amount, perhaps \$10 or so, but will prove to be of great value in terms of increased unit saleability, reduced vandalism and an improved atmosphere for family life.

There is a glut of condominium units still on the market but the slowed pace of new construction in 1978 will allow this surplus to be

cleaned up by the end of the year.

Although builder emphasis may turn towards cluster homes and other alternative housing forms, condominiums are here to stay. Their owners are not from some lower social group nor do they possess any more or any less of the ingredients that are needed to make a good community. Most of them simply had the timely misfortune of buying into their first piece of real estate after the price revolution of 1973-74.

If housing was still a cheap commodity we would all live in single family homes on 60 and 70 foot lots. That ideal of private home ownership remains in most people's minds and if condominiums are to be made into an equally viable alternative their buyers will have to take a good step further towards understanding the concept and towards imitating the values and sense of ownership of their single family home neighbors.

If participation creates involvement then snow shovelling, lawn mowing and flower planting are the best route. Besides, it's a lot more fun.



John Stewart

Study in frustration

It's always amazing to see how the good intentions of municipal staff get turned upside down in the convoluted planning mill.

Take the Lakeshore Commercial Feasibility Study: please, as Henry Youngman might say.

For the past several months, planner John Calvert and the owners of property in the Clarkson business district have been locked in a struggle of good intentions set at cross-purposes.

Calvert and Ward 2 Councillor Mary Helen Spence want Clarkson's outmoded commercial zonings, which allow some land uses considered inappropriate, removed. If they aren't, the landowners could conceivably ask for development of things such as tourist cabins, motels and service stations, which are not compatible with the ideal of the Business Improvement District.

So the city is doing an overall land-use study. It is converting many of the sites, which conflict with the goal of revitalizing the Clarkson district, to uses which it thinks are most appropriate. In many instances, this simply means recognizing present land use. In many others, it means a designation of "Clarkson Village Commercial" zoning, which is a catch-all zoning to limit development to what the municipality thinks is appropriate.

But what the city thinks is best for Clarkson and what the businessmen and landowners think is best for Clarkson are two entirely different animals. The landowners get the feeling that the city is taking something away from them by making these changes. The city thinks it should have the right to ensure that future construction meets the objectives of improving the area, not allowing the continued proliferation of gas stations and strip plazas.

The businessmen's idea of revitalization is something like the McDonald's Restaurant, which Mississauga flatly turned down earlier. They want some kind of a popular drawing card to get people shopping in the area. The goal of a pedestrian-oriented business section is no good if the potential customers have nothing to get out of their cars to go to.

Many of the businessmen fear that the city wants to create some kind of a quaint, dairy business retreat instead of a bustling, money-making mecca for owners. Thus, the great debate over the original designation of "historic" rather than Clarkson Village Commercial.

The historic designation became an emotional issue for the businessmen because it had an archaic ring to it, suggesting looking toward the past instead of the future. The municipality wanted to use the term merely to indicate the old standards used in developing many of the properties. Still, the concept of labelling some of those strip plazas along the south side of Lakeshore as historic commercial sites held the concept up to deserved ridicule.

The mistrust by the businessmen multiplied when planners changed their recommendations on some sites. And then the local residents' association got into the act. They're the people who were largely responsible for giving McDonald's a big flack attack, so you can imagine how the businessmen felt when the residents started talking about preserving the "gateways" to their communities on Lakeshore Road.

So far, the commercial study has been a fairly frustrating experience for everyone. But most of the rough spots have been ironed out. The businessmen now seem to see the rationale for the recommendations, even if they don't agree with them.

On the really controversial sites, guarantees have been given for full discussion, if and when specific proposals are made.

It may not be the most efficient process around, but municipal planning can often broaden horizons for those who make the effort to get involved.



Helen Kaulbach

CB fantasy world

"Breaker One-O, Midnight Rider calling Honda Momma. Have you got your ears on?"
"Hold the hammer down, friend, and keep the shiny side up and the greasy side down. Stack them eights, good buddy, and 10-4."

Unless you have a CB or a CBer in the family, this might sound like a foreign language. A separate cult of CB "slanguage" has grown up around CB users and being incomprehensible to anyone but the "in" group is what makes it so attractive.

Citizens Band Radio is perhaps the biggest thing in communications since the invention of the telephone. Certainly it's the biggest in communications for the travelling public.

My CB has relieved the boredom of constant driving. I'm on the road more than half the day and I was awfully tired of listening to open-line shows. Now I listen to one big open line show on my CB and get in my two cents worth as well. No matter how angry you get at a radio announcer, you can't answer him back. With a CB radio you're in the center of the action and can add your opinion at any time. If the subject being discussed is boring, you can always switch to another channel and start another conversation. And, best of all, you can do this behind the anonymity of your "handle."

Although federal regulations state that you should begin all transmissions with your licence number, few CBers do. Most identify themselves only through their handles. A CBer's handle is very important to him because it tells the world not only who he is, but what he is. It might reflect his hobby, for instance, Sharpshooter or Hot Rodder, or try to project an image like Disco Dan. A shy, quiet type might even try for a macho image with a handle like Super Stud or Mighty Man. Another CBer might set up an image for herself with a handle like Blondie, Foxy Lady or Rich Bitch.

The anonymity of the airwaves and the use of a handle can often lead to a little harmless flirtation. You can say what you like and make all sorts of promises to that sexy voice on channel 15, but you know that, unless you volunteer your name and phone number the affair will never go any farther than your microphone switch.

A CB flirtation is a good way to indulge your fantasies. I can be driving down the QEW (the Quick and Easy in CB slanguage), flirting outrageously with this deep gravelly voice and imagine that I am talking to a tall, dark and handsome rock star in a silver gray Porsche, while in reality he's probably a balding father of seven in

a dump truck. He probably imagines he's flirting with a beautiful blonde in a bright red TR7 and not a fortyish mother of two in a brown Honda.

Where else but on CB can you say softly to a strange man, "Let's go to the basement for threes and nines" without raising half the eyebrows on the block. For the uninitiated that means, let's switch to channel one and get acquainted.

Talking on CB has given birth to a whole new language. Some CBers use the 10 code, but most just talk in CB slanguage. The police are probably called more different names in CB than any other group, including bears, smokies, county mountie, night crawler, papa bear, mama bear (policewoman), lawman and white knight. A police car has been known as bear on wheels, bear on skates, brown bag (unmarked car), bubble gum machine, catch car, rolling bear, Tijuana taxi or bear in the sky (helicopter).

Some of the slanguage is rather descriptive. A talkative CBer is known as an Alligator (all mouth and no ears); a speeding motorist who doesn't have a CB is known as Bear Bait; a school bus is a Winkin Blinkin; a not-so-good restaurant is a Choke and Puke.

The CB has also saved me hours of being stuck in traffic jams. Before I drive onto the QEW or the 401, I always ask for a traffic report for the section I will be driving. If it's jammed up or very slow, I can then pick an alternative.

Most four-wheelers (that's you and me) stay tuned to the call channel, 10, while the 18-wheelers (that's the big guys) use channel 19 as their call channel. Channel 9 is supposed to be the emergency channel and is supposedly monitored by the police, but I have called in two accident reports myself recently on channel 9 and received no reply. An emergency channel that no one listens to is rather useless.

When we finish talking (transmitting?) about all the fun a CBer has, then it's time to mention the real reason most persons give for having the radio; to be able to call for help in an emergency on the road. That's really why I bought it in the first place, although I've never had to use it for that and hope I never will. Meanwhile, I'm enjoying all the chatter, the companionship, avoiding the traffic and, last but not least, I haven't had a speeding ticket since I got my ears on to tell me where all the bears are.

"This is Shutterbug saying 10-4 and wishing you all the good numbers."



Stewart Page

The double standard

One of the most conspicuous inconsistencies in society appears to be the large gulf between society's principles in the world of sport as opposed to the world of politics. Both worlds have their foibles and immense problems; both tend to be kind of crazy; and both require a special kind of individual to survive. The question, however, is why certain behavior by professional athletes is tolerated and condoned, but the same sort of behavior in politics often becomes the object of self-righteous abuse and criticism.

Whenever a politician is found to have committed even the most innocuous indiscretion, the media manage to portray him or her as horrible and undeserving. Immediately, there appears in major newspapers numerous editorials and columns explaining why the politician cannot possibly be allowed to continue in public office. This is because we supposedly want only people in office who have

never done wrong in their lives. In turn, this is because we apparently feel that if they had done wrong and been caught at it, they will surely do wrong again and will make thus poor public servants. Probably, as long as Leon Spinks can show up for his next fight, no matter what his background or present behavior, that will be sufficient to expect of him.

For some reason, we also expect politicians to be able to handle not only their own finances properly, but also the money received from the public in the form of taxes. When it might appear that taxpayers' money has been mis-spent, for example, on one of Otto Lang's airline flights, a pious outcry is always heard. But when sports figures make large sums of money for doing nothing, like Sonny Liston used to do, society says, "Well, if they can get away with it, fine." It doesn't matter if the sports hero says and does outrageous things while, at the same time, thousands of citizens go to bed every night with rats.

Al Unser, recent winner of the Indianapolis 500 Race, for example, had some interesting things to say about money. Unser, who has won the race three times now, said that he thinks the winner should get at least \$1 million. At present, the formula at Indianapolis is to give some of the prize money to everyone who at least starts the race. This year, the race apparently had \$1,145,225 in prize money to be distributed. Mr. Unser's irritation, of course, comes from the cruel fact that the actual winner of the race receives only \$290,000. According to papers, Unser stated that when he races at Indy, he expects to "really come up with something," if he wins it. Two hundred and ninety thousand just is not enough for Mr. Unser.

Such greedy views do not necessarily incite others to piety, however. What does the "language used by the prime minister."

Recently, in the midst of a heated exchange in Parliament on some vital matter, Trudeau had become angered. He finished his response by denouncing something as "bunk." Former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker, despite the clear fact that Hansard had shown Trudeau to have said "bunk," was trying to condemn him for having said something else — a vulgar word. Reference was made, of course, to the time a few years ago the prime minister had claimed to have said "fuddle duddle." But, with all the nation's problems as a backdrop, this exchange was actually chosen to be reported in the media. The pious question: How could we retain a prime minister who swore? It does not matter that much talk in the dressing room of the Toronto Maple Leafs could not be published due to the preponderance of "expletives deleted." Or that the detractors of former Solicitor General Francis Fox no doubt continue to enjoy the irresponsible behavior of some sports heroes.



Jim Adair

My friend, the nanny

My dictionary says a nanny is either a children's nurse or a she-goat. Jack's been called worse things than a she-goat before, and he'll probably have to put up with more of that kind of thing now that he's a fully qualified nanny.

He's the only male graduate of Sheridan College's two-year nanny program, and so far as anyone seems to know, the only male nanny around.

Must be a really strange guy, right? What is he, some kind of a fruitcake?

I don't think so. He's been a friend of mine for about five years now, and he's one of the most honest, caring and sensitive people I know. Of course, he's a little weird — he wouldn't be my friend if he wasn't.

The first time I met Jack I was hungover and in a walk-in food freezer.

Despite the red-rimmed eyes, I got a job working in a new Mississauga restaurant, and

my first assignment was to clean out the inside of this freezer. Jack got the same chore. It wasn't an ideal place to start a friendship, but it happened.

He was well-liked around the restaurant, and had the guts to come up with some of his own ideas for doing things. Like the time they gave him a ridiculous-looking string tie to wear at short order. He went home and made himself a bright orange bow tie, which certainly drew the attention of customers.

He's also a humanitarian. Much to the embarrassment of the restaurant, a family of mice moved into the kitchen area. Rather than set traps for the mice to get rid of them, Jack tried to take them alive so he could free them outside. For an hour, he sat holding on to a string, ready to pull it and catch mice that were dumb enough to go for the cheese bait. He caught a couple, too.

I have a couple of presents in my house that Jack made. There's an old bottle with a long stretched-out neck, and a ceramic cow.

Jack knew I collected cows — ceramic, china, cloth, anything but real ones — and he made me one at school. Inscribed on the bottom is "To Jim the Cook . . . from Jack. Jesus loves you." The cow has kind of a long stretched-out neck, too, but it's a fine addition to the collection.

Jack is, I'm sure, good with kids partly because of his sensitivity. There was a party at his place to which he invited all the restaurant staff and some people from a camp where he was a councillor in the summer.

There was also a friend of his there, a girl who was deaf.

From Jack's point of view, the party was a disaster. The people from camp all sat on the floor, the people from the restaurant gathered

in the corner, and the deaf girl, who knew nobody but Jack, sat in the middle.

At about 10 p.m., the girl decided to go home because she felt awkward. At 10:30 p.m., the camp people decided to go to McDonald's.

Jack was so upset that he didn't bother coming back downstairs to his party, or what was left of it. He didn't care about the camp people leaving; he was bothered that the deaf girl hadn't had a good time, and he blamed himself for her embarrassment.

Jack's now a professional nanny trying to find a good job. He's engaged to another graduate from the nanny program, and he says those who are close to him don't think it is strange he's in that profession.

And the babies he tends to don't care one way or the other . . . as long as they get clean diapers.

Jo Ann Stevenson



Imagine no stereotypes

Here it is — my first column outside of Tastes of the Times. Much as the food column is fun and suited to my interests, it surprises me how many people, including staffers here, regard cooking as my only editorial contribution.

Such stereotyping, although normally overlooked by my good nature, had to be stopped when a fellow worker asked if this column would enlighten him at last about how to remove spots and stains with the use of lemon.

I do admit that some stereotyping does have its place. When you're standing behind the counter at Mac's Milk, the person in front of you with a gun could be typecast as a touch shady; or the new babysitter — who is dropped off at your door by a car full of teenagers shouting "When does the party start?" — may have flunked nanny school; dogs that foam at the mouth probably belong to the rabid category; and goldfish that swim belly up can be classified as has-beens.

Imagine a country with a law against stereotyping. All our neatly filed acquaintances would need larger folders in the steel cabinets of our minds.

They'd have room to grow and change. People could be free to be much more (or less) than we'd assumed.

Such people could literally force open the drawers and refuse to be filed. Unfiled people could befuddle Statistics Canada.

They couldn't be "predicted" or surveyed or classified. Why, such people could overthrow the beloved bureaucratic foundations of our country.

Schools would have to treat each student as an individual.

And no one would pay attention to the Gallup Poll, even if it predicted another Trudeau victory.

Come to think about it, without this poll warning, we could sabotage our own country. Trudeau could squeak through unnoticed, and begin a new era of the Just Society.

If we thought we hadn't noticed his last Just Society, imagine how unnoticeable his next one could be. A law against stereotyping would sure have its price. Maybe we should live with the status quo. How would you like a neat trick for removing spots and stains?