

Empty classrooms: number a matter of interpretation

Peel County has 162 empty elementary school classrooms with 26 new rooms in construction that in turn will remain empty for upwards of two years, a board of education report has revealed.

"I can see the headlines now," lamented board vice-chairman Bill Kent last week. The 188 is not really a total number — it has to be interpreted."

Jack Brown, the superintendent of business affairs, said a full 37 rooms of those listed across the county have no chance at all of being occupied within the next two years.

About 89 of the public school classes are in the South Peel area

(Mississauga, Streetsville and Port Credit).

Board Chairman Ted Conover argued that the list of empties was misleading because "unused" classrooms were in many cases used. Many are used on a part time basis for special language labs, lunchrooms, music rooms, audio visual rooms or library extensions.

The report listed the many uses that empty classrooms can be put to including: as an alternative accommodation for retarded children; as temporary accommodation where construction projects in other areas is incomplete; as additional teaching areas; as work space for specialized services such as

speech training; and as a facility which the school lacks such as a vice-principal's office.

In addition the board administration feels the rooms can be put to good community use as daytime centres, day care facilities, pre-natal class facilities and for rental to the Roman Catholic Separate School Board and office accommodation for board personnel.

The major reason for the surplus stems from the sudden slowdown in the percentage growth of school age children in the area. The baby boom has burst and will take a few years to readjust school growth rates to match the relatively declining need.



DR. GARY THALER

NEIL DAVIS

BILL DAVIS

Bill Davis faces political newcomers in Peel North

Incumbent Premier William Davis, MPP for Peel North since 1959, will fight the 1971 campaign against two political newcomers. New Democratic Party candidate Neil Davis, and Liberal aspirant Dr. Gary Thaler.

Davis, 42, assumed the leadership of the Progressive Conservative Party in February of this year after eight years as Minister of Education and 12 as a member of the legislature.

Davis made the decision in September to cut off financial support of separate schools after Grade 10.

"Our conclusions were based on a deep and sincere belief in the merit of a single, universally accessible, publicly supported secondary school system," he said in a Times questionnaire.

He is non-committal on regional government for Peel and Halton County until all recent studies "are fully assessed."

No one, in my opinion, can say that regional government is a good or bad, necessary or unnecessary, for any given region."

Davis believes that disposal of industrial wastes "is primarily the responsibility of the private sector."

"If private industry does not look after this responsibility, governments must see that the job is done in some way that is fair to all concerned."

Urban planning philosophy as applied to Peel North "will become increasingly clear as further refinements are made to the Toronto Centred Region Plan," he has said.

Priority among provincial issues include a rapid transit system to run through Malton, Weston, Brampton, Bramalea, and Georgetown. Lately he has announced a

program to create 42,000 jobs and a three per cent tax cut to aid the economy.

Davis still lives in Brampton with his wife Kathy and their five children. He maintains a riding office to answer the problems of his constituents.

Peel North New Democrat Party candidate Neil Davis, 30, who lives in the Park Royal area of Mississauga and is running for Queen's Park for the first time, believes he can better represent the riding than can Bill Davis.

"I will have an area office here in Brampton where the people can always reach me."

"Realistically Bill Davis is beatable — the difficulty here is the mystique that surrounds Bill — but the response to the NDP canvas has been terrific."

Neil Davis claims Bill Davis' announcement of extended GO train service "is just following in the footsteps of the NDP's longstated policy."

The NDP candidate's views on transportation reveal he feels it should be a municipal responsibility with the province aiding in finances.

"The Foundation Tax Plan proposed by the NDP would provide financing to meet special needs in municipalities which cannot raise sufficient funds locally."

He agrees with the extension of financial support to separate secondary schools.

Davis supports "sound regional government, designed to meet the needs of the people" as preferable to city status for areas like Mississauga.

He is married with two children and has taught school in Mississauga for 13 years.

Dr. Gary Thaler, running on the Liberal ticket in Peel

North, is a 35 year old bachelor and Assistant Professor of Botany at Erindale College.

He is a strong proponent of a long term program of recreational land assembly.

"With the steady flow of people from the country to the city it is hard to visualize how crowded this part of Ontario will be in a decade from now."

Dr. Thaler has criticized the Conservative party for procrastination in acquiring land.

"In the election of 1955, T.L. Kennedy, the Conservative candidate, promised a Provincial Park at the forks of the Credit, but it was not until 1970 that negotiations to purchase the land actually began."

He has spoken out against "the hodgepodge growth" of gravel pits in Peel North.

We must reclaim the old unsightly gravel pits and mask the new ones."

Thaler, in a statement to The Times, said more concentration should be put on rapid transit rather than a "senseless dependence on expressways for commuting purposes."

He called for an examination of a monorail type transit service.

He feels support to separate schools should be continued to honor "the spirit of our agreement with other regions and religions which founded Confederation."

Regarding waste plants Thaler said government encouragement is needed, but private capital should be used to build the plants.

"Strong action is needed to provide the recycling capacity."

On regional government he notes "a regional approach to government makes possible sensible development of land, and the building of facilities without wasteful duplication."

Munden Park residents stop high-rise proposal

The people's wishes triumphed last week when a delegation of some 35 Munden Park area homeowners persuaded Mississauga planning board to have plans for a high rise apartment block scrubbed from a proposed rental project near their homes.

Munden Acres Limited applied to have the zoning by-law amended from H-RM7D3 to RM7D3 to permit the construction of 202 townhouse units and one 12-storey apartment building on a 12-acre parcel on North Service Road at Cawthra Road.

In effect, planning board was being asked to drop the "holding" designation to permit the developer to start construction on the project approved in principle in 1969. A previous proposal had indicated that there would be no high-rise on the site. The

present application would not materially effect the population density.

The delegation objected strongly to the inclusion of a high-rise in the plan, citing the danger of "peepers with binoculars," lack of nearby parkland and playgrounds, and school overcrowding as reasons for refusal of the application.

All said they were not aware that such a scheme was proposed for the block in question which abuts a hydro right-of-way. Most homeowners said they purchased their home in the last two years "to get away from high-rises" and claimed they were surprised when they received notification of the public meeting.

The residents were assured by planning board that school facilities and services must be available before families are allowed

to move into a new development.

The plan submitted by the developer showed provision for 313 surface parking spaces for the townhouse units and underground parking for the apartment building. Two children's play areas and a swimming pool were indicated as part of the on-site open space which amounts to about 50 per cent of the lot area. A two-storey recreational building was to be provided adjacent to the apartment building.

The developer indicated that apartment rents would be in the \$185 to \$250 a month range.

Faced with the problem of satisfying the homeowners, planning board recommended that the developer be requested to submit a further revised site plan based on a total townhouse development.



Auctioneer John Fitz points out bidder during sale of purses at Saturday's Mississauga Police Department auction. The annual event has become a popular one among residents.

School bus slams into car, 5 hurt

Four children were injured when a school bus carrying 28 students from Earncliffe Drive Public School in Bramalea smashed into a car on Airport Road in Malton last Wednesday afternoon.

Police said Jack Devine, 29, of Brisco Street in Brampton, was driving a

Norton Bus Lines school bus north on Airport Road when a car driven by Jurgen Kohler, also 29 of Weston, attempted to make a left turn onto the southbound lane of Airport Road from Airline Road.

The bus plowed into the auto — sending four teenagers and Kohler to Peel

Memorial Hospital in Brampton. Kohler is reported in satisfactory condition with back-injuries.

Grant Emon, 14, Kim Devinett, 13, Rosy Yoklan, 13, and Susan Abel, 12, all of Bramalea, were treated for cuts and bruises and released.

The kids were on an outing for the afternoon and returning to the school when the accident happened. Police estimate the total damage to both vehicles at \$2,200.

Mothers request sidewalk safety committee responds

Mothers who had asked Mississauga council to provide bus service or sidewalks for their children who walk to school along Dundas Highway in Erindale will have their wishes fulfilled.

At the request of Acting Mayor Chic Murray, who promised the mothers immediate action, a special meeting of the traffic safety committee was called to discuss the problem.

The mothers said that 16 children were obliged to walk along Dundas on the south side where there is no sidewalk from their homes near Dundas Crescent to the traffic lights at the entrance to Credit Woodlands Drive in order to reach Woodlands Senior Public School.

The four-lane highway is extremely dangerous to children, they told council, and they fear for their children's lives. Because of the hazard a

bus en route to Springfield Public School used to pick up the children near their homes, but two weeks after school started in September they were told they could no longer ride the bus as all seats were allotted.

School board policy dictates that children who live less than two miles from their school cannot take the bus unless the traffic safety committee rules a road is too dangerous to walk along.

Councillor Jack Kehoe, who said he had watched the children making their way along the highway, said that in winter snow banks border the highway, forcing children to walk on the road. He termed the situation "atrocious".

The matter has come up before the safety council in the past, but no clear decision has been made.

There is a sidewalk on the north side of Dundas, but to reach it the children must

cross four lanes of traffic at the crest of the hill in Erindale.

At the special meeting of the traffic safety committee, a recommendation was made to council that a crossing guard be placed at the intersection of Dundas Street and Dundas Crescent so children can cross to the sidewalk safely.

A sidewalk should be constructed on the south side of Dundas from Dundas Crescent to the Credit Woodlands "immediately", said a second recommendation. When the sidewalk is completed, the crossing guard should be moved to the traffic lights at the Credit Woodlands.

A third recommendation was that the speed limit on Erindale Station Road in the area of Woodlands Senior Public School be reduced to 25 miles per hour.

Council will consider the three recommendations today (Wednesday).

'Nothing' house destroyed in fire

A fire, probably started by transients, destroyed a bungalow at the Dixie Road end of the airport's new east-west Jumbo jet runway Thursday night. The house was in the midst of demolition.

International Airport owns both the property and the house at 8657 Dixie Road just south of Derry Road. The land was bought when the

runway was constructed literally to the building's back door.

There was no insurance on the structure and the loss was nil.

Fire Chief Joe Miller said three trucks responded to the alarm but the building was in a blaze by the time they arrived. The fire was quickly "knocked down" but the house was destroyed.

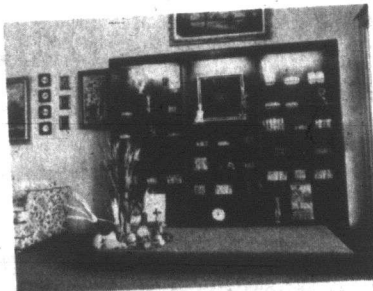


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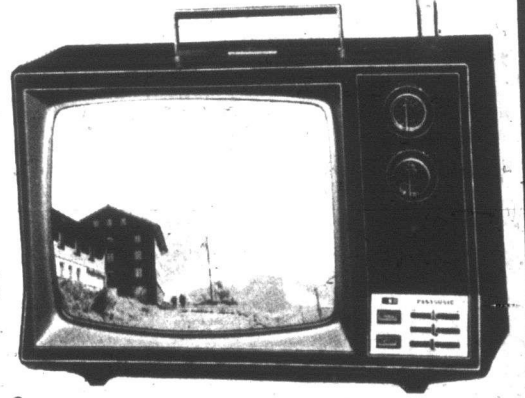
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