

Thought Of The Week
By Ted Ecclestone

Take nothing on its looks; take everything on evidence. There's no better rule.



Dickens
Great Expectations (1860-1861), ch. 40

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Greenbelt plan both praised and criticized at Mono meeting

By DAN PELTON
Staff Reporter

The merits of the Ontario government's 1.8-million acre Greenbelt were debated in Mono Centre on Saturday, as the Mono Mulmur Citizens Coalition (MC2) staged a Growing the Greenbelt meeting which, in the words of meeting chair Harvey Kolodney, was meant to be "an educational event."

At issue was the Queens Park proposal that the Greenbelt — established in 2005 to protect environmentally sensitive and agricultural land in the Golden Horseshoe area of Southern Ontario — be expanded by about 1.2 million acres. Almost all of Mulmur and most of Mono would be included in the expansion, as well as large parts of Simcoe County.

While expressing some disappointment that the focus of the meeting shifted from the proposed Greenbelt expansion and leaned towards the merits of its very existence, Mr. Kolodney felt the meeting was

beneficial insofar as it presented its attendees with distinct and different points of view.

He also held out the possibility that MC2 might arrange a follow-up meeting on the same issue.

Those on hand for the event heard arguments from both proponents of the expansion and others who feel the existing Greenbelt is just another bureaucratic burden on local landowners and doesn't serve any useful purpose.

The panel included expansion proponent Heather Harding of Toronto-based Environmental Defence, which she said is one of about 80 "watchdog groups" that compose the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance.

She argued such an expansion is necessary because "saving bits and parcels of land doesn't work. We need to be saving corridors."

Mulmur township planner Ron Mills, also on the panel, suggested the Greenbelt Act was an "initiative that was inevitable because of environmental paranoia." He pointed

to a recent Environics poll that showed 90 per cent of urban-centred respondents supporting the Greenbelt. But of those supporters, Mr. Mills said, the poll showed only one-third truly understood what the Greenbelt was all about.

On the other hand, he said, the poll determined that 80 per cent of rural respondents are aware of the provisions in the

Greenbelt Act. He said the poll did not ask these particular respondents what they thought of the initiative.

He also posed a rhetorical question. What would be solved by an expanded Greenbelt that isn't already being taken care of by existing municipal plans?

"You bought into this area because it's really nice," he

reasoned to the audience. "Who made this area really nice? It wasn't the Greenbelt. It was the people who have been the stewards of this land for the last 150 years."

Contending that Mulmur is probably in the most natural state, right now, than it has been in the last 100 years, Mr. Mills said: "The difference between the Greenbelt plan

and what is done locally is that we don't say 'you can't do this.' Instead, we will say 'we could let you do this, as long as you do it right.'"

Ms. Harding countered: "Those of you who say they can take care of things locally, I implore you to go to Durham region. It was once as nice (as the Mono Mulmur area), but now it's subdivision after subdivision. The Greenbelt is a long-term plan to preserve."

In a later interview, she suggested that it is often the case where one particular municipality might not be as environmentally conscious as another one nearby. She pointed to the relatively large-scale housing development in Innisfil, in Simcoe County, as an example.

"Any development, that happens just outside your borders, matters," said Ms. Harding.

The other panel members Saturday were Victor Doyle of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Kathryn Pounder of the Niagara Escarpment Commission, and Mono farmer Gerald Reid.

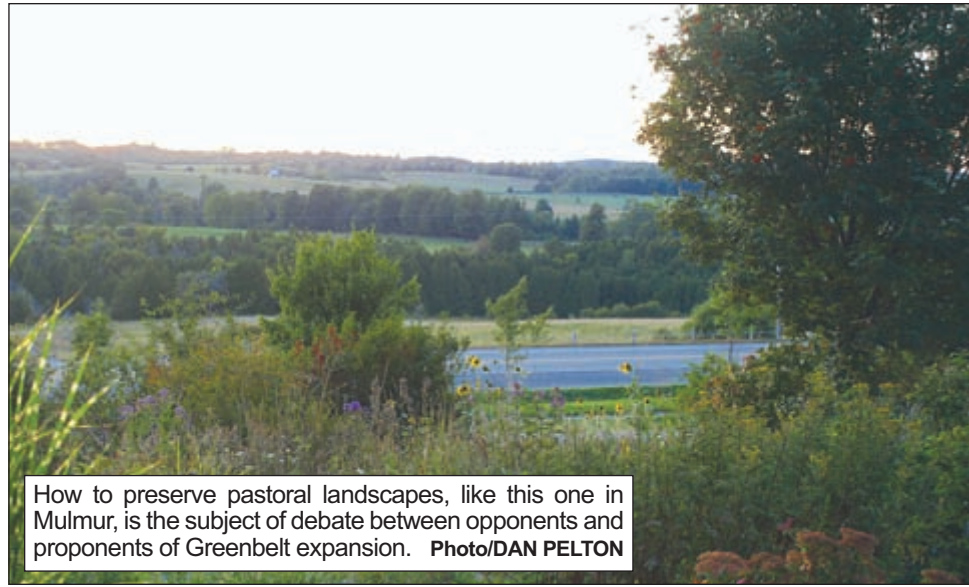
Mr. Doyle, the ministry's manager of community planning and development for central Ontario, stressed the need for farmland protection by pointing out that 50 per cent of Canada's class one agricultural land is situated in southern Ontario.

"There are currently 8 million people in the Golden Horseshoe and we're growing by 100,000 a year," Mr. Doyle told the audience. "Southern Ontario is expected to have a population of 11.5 million people by 2031 with 25,000 more in Dufferin County."

Thus, the pressure to build homes on agricultural land will be intense and Mr. Doyle contends that an expanded Greenbelt will preserve farmland.

Mr. Reid did not paint an optimistic picture of the family farm. His Mono farm is one of a dwindling breed, he maintained, saying that he knows of only nine potato growers in the area, compared with 75 in 1960. As late as 15 years ago, Mr. Reid could count 40 area

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How to preserve pastoral landscapes, like this one in Mulmur, is the subject of debate between opponents and proponents of Greenbelt expansion. Photo/DAN PELTON

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WESTSIDE THUNDER captain Ivana Juric turns the ball down court in their 53-31 win over CDDHS in the Junior Girls District 4 basketball championship held Monday afternoon in Orangeville. Photo/MIKE MALONEY

Royals upset Thunder in senior final

By MIKE MALONEY
Sports Editor

It was the meeting people were waiting for all season, as both junior and senior teams from Westside and Centre Dufferin met in Orangeville on Monday afternoon, each vying for the title of District 4 Girls Basketball champion in their respective divisions.

Taking to the floor first were the junior girls. Finishing one - two in the regular season standings, undefeated Westside was the odds-on favorite to win the championship, having handed CDDHS their only two losses of the season.

And true to form, the Thunder followed the script to a letter. With Sami Mikulik leading the charge with 15 points for Westside and Braedyn Ferguson nipping at her heels with 12, Orangeville took the lead early and never

looked back, posting a 53-31 win to take the Junior Girls District 4 title.

Royals Clarre Shaw was the bright light on the Shelburne roster, notching nine points for CDDHS.

In the afternoon's second game, it was the senior girls taking to the floor with the only expectation in this game being that a closely contested, hard fought battle be waged between the two teams.

In regular season play, just as with the juniors, the two squads also finished one - two in the standings and, again, with Westside taking both of their two regular season meetings. Unlike the junior paring however, the senior games were much closer affairs and a determined Royals team knew this was one they could win.

From the opening tip off, Shelburne took it to the Thunder, and never

let up.

Melanie Koehli opened the scoring for CDDHS, followed by Hannah Early chipping in for five points to give Shelburne a 8-7 lead at the end of the first quarter.

Bouncing back in the second quarter, Westside fell in step behind Janelle Kottlenberg. A force to be reckoned with both defensively and offensively, Kottlenberg made a beautiful pass down the floor to Katie Rankin. Making no mistake to drop two, she wasn't afraid to mix it up and drove the floor time and time again.

By the half, Westside had regained the lead but only by the slimmest of margins with the score 20-19. Smelling victory in the air, Shelburne cranked it up in the second half.

Jordyn Bishop made a smart pass to Koehli under the basket for two, giving CDDHS the lead once again.

Emily Bonello dropped a three pointer from the left before Kottlenberg notched a pair for Orangeville to keep it close.

But Westside's frustration soon began to show as the Royals con-

tinued to control the play. They added ten more to make the score 34-27.

Fourth quarter action started with an end-to-end seesaw.

Brooke Rowland was the go-to shooter for Westside, dropping seven points in a row for the Thunder. Yet, CDDHS responded to each with one of their own.

Bonello would score two before adding another triple, while Emma Bryan threaded the needle with a pass through a crowd to Bishop for two before

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ORANGEVILLE NOVICE SELECT Flyers started their 2009-10 season on a winning note, posting a huge 9-0 win over Milton at the Tony Rose arena on Saturday evening. For more on the game, please turn to page B2. Photo/MIKE MALONEY

Muskie streak goes down in OT

The unbeaten streak finally came to an end for the Shelburne Muskies Saturday night as the team were unable to make the most of their chances, going down 4-3 to Lucknow in an overtime shootout.

Riding the wave of a four game unbeaten streak when they took to the ice against Walkerton on Friday, Shelburne soon found themselves in unfamiliar territory, trailing by two midway through the first period before Derek Smith would draw them back within one, scoring shorthanded with 4:48 left in the frame.

Stung and still on the power-play, Walkerton

answered right back 35 seconds later with Capitals' Darrell Cowen slipping his second of four on the night past Muskies goalie Mike Tardiff.

With the clock winding down the seconds of the first, Sean Thompson teamed up with Derrick Robson and Kevin Tuckey to make it 3-2.

In the second period Thompson added two more but Walkerton made the most of their chances, capitalizing twice on Muskies misdeeds to retain their one goal lead heading into the third.

But it was the third where Shelburne shone

brightest. With Tardiff locking up the back door, the Muskie offense stepped it up with Zac Duerden and Sean Connor posting markers on either side of Smith's second of the night to lift the Fish past Walkerton and make it five in a row unbeaten with the 7-5 win.

But all good things come to an end and it was the next night in Lucknow where the winning streak would be broken.

Bus legs and missed opportunities again contributed to Shelburne falling behind by two in the first period of play, but they tied the Lancers heading in the second

on power-play goals by Connor and Brad Horan.

Thompson would make it 3-2 just seconds into the third with his seventh goal of the season only to see that lead disappear two minutes later. Unable to break the deadlock in the balance of regulation time and through overtime, the fate of the game came down to a shootout with the Lancers only scoring once but that was enough as the Shelburne snipers came up empty handed, earning Lucknow the 4-3 victory.

The weekend ahead promises no let up for

the Muskies.

Trailing Elora by one point in the standings, a win by Shelburne over the Rocks in Elora on Friday night would lift them into first place in the WAAA Senior Mens Northern division; just in time for a return to the CDRC on Saturday night for a date with Durham.

While Friday night's road contest starts at 8:30, the opening face-off of Saturday night's contest at home has been moved up to 7 p.m. to accommodate the Muskies annual fund raising dance to be held upstairs at the CDRC right after the games conclusion.

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