

Hospital delay worth an announcement, and a fight

In October 2004, the Province officially gave the Town of Oakville 100 acres of land just north of Dundas between Regional Road 25 and Third Line, (part of the Oakville Land Assembly) complete with a press conference and photo op. In March 2007, the Province gave the Town of Oakville 50 acres of land just north of Dundas between Regional Road 25 and Third Line (the same land) for a new hospital site. That announcement came complete with a press conference and photo op.

In May 2007, the Province gave the Town of Oakville 100 acres of land just north of Dundas between Regional Road 25 and Third Line for parkland, (sounding familiar?), surrounding the new hospital, complete with a press conference and photo op.

The new hospital was to be completed by 2013. The provincial election was in October.

Last month, a representative of Infrastructure Ontario quietly announced at a regular OTMH board meeting, that the construction of a new hospital would be delayed by 13 months, due to lack of 'construction capacity.' No press conference, no photo op.

According to Infrastructure Ontario, there are only a handful of firms with the qualifications and expertise to build the kind of provincial super-projects that this government has scheduled to build and apparently they're all going to be tied up for the next two, three – who knows how many it will eventually end up to be – years.

We're not suggesting there's any cover up here, but it doesn't take a rocket scientist, just a qualified demographer to realize that twenty years ago we probably could have guessed that the baby boomers were going to need major health care services at a particular age. Ta Da! Here we are!

And if indeed we've been bumped from, or down, a priority list, that MPP Kevin Flynn suggests we can get back on; the question would be, why? Milton, the fastest growing community in Canada, is part of Halton Healthcare Services, to which both the Oakville and Georgetown hospitals also belong. The pressure for hospital services isn't going to be delayed – it will only intensify.

So why keep it quiet? This is not good news for Oakville and Oakvillians should be made aware. There seemed to be no problem telling us the good news in an election year. Are we not due the same consideration now – even though the news is bad? Its impact is enormous.

We think the best news about this whole thing is that MPPs Kevin Flynn and Ted Chudleigh are working together, despite party lines, to get this train wreck back on track.

– Jody Sanderson, Editor
editorial@oakvilletoday.ca
