

Credit where credit is due

by SHERALYN ROMAN

We are rapidly approaching everyone's favourite time of year, tax time, but despite the title, that's not what this column is about. Known for occasionally calling out the Town (and/or Doug Ford) on a variety of issues, I hope I am equally known for trying to be generous of spirit and give credit where credit is due, even if the amount of credit is very, very, small. After all, most progress is incremental whether we're talking about a baby learning to walk, recovery from a health concern, or when learning long division. Is that still a thing? Did I just give away my age with that last question? I digress. Slow or not, here's a reminder of some of the things for which we should be thankful, followed of course by perhaps just one or two callouts!

While the Town (at least in theory) remains busy addressing a response to the application of a multinational consortium intent on decimating yet more Caledon acreage, it's only fair we make note of something pit-related that's slightly more positive. The Credit Valley Conservation Authority is hosting a 'Pits to Parks' information session on April 18 to update residents and seek input on the ecological restoration of two former aggregate sites. Their goal is to undertake a series of studies reviewing the 'technical, environmental and social feasibility of importing clean excess soil to facilitate the enhanced ecological restoration of Pinchin Pit and Flaherty West Pit.'

Yes, it strikes me as a little ironic that while we are talking about allowing not just excavation, but the blasting to kingdom come at yet another quarry in our collective backyards, we are also talking about filling in the damage caused by previous pits. However, to give credit where credit is due, the potential incremental progress of a 'pits to parks' policy is one that will benefit Caledon residents if not now, then for generations to come.

In other news, the carnage on Highway 10 continues to dominate the Caledon news cycle.

There's simply no other way to refer to this highway as anything other than a multitude of accidents waiting to happen, and happening they are. However, in addition to changes that were implemented some time ago to address significant traffic concerns at Highway 10 and Olde Base Line, finally something is also being done to help alleviate the chaotic mayhem happening now at Highway 10 and Old School Road. A recent announcement has confirmed that a 'protective permissive left turn' signal has been installed. In other words, an advanced green light. This will potentially enhance the safety of the thousands of people travelling through that intersection daily. Combined with the VERY LONG OVERDUE building of a second exit out of Southfields (when Abbotside Way finally connects to Heart Lake Road) residents at the south end of Caledon will hopefully begin to feel at least a little more secure in their daily commutes. Nonetheless, the critics were fast and furious, taking to social media demanding a complete overhaul of the highway from Shelburne to south of Valleywood Blvd. I am in complete agreement, but progress is progress however slow it might be, so I'm giving credit where credit is due.

As 'giving credit' goes, let's hope that those Councillors who have lobbied hard for further changes to enhance safety on Highway 10 (Ward One Councillor Lynn Kiernan, thank you) continue to do so. In his own recent social media post, it seems Councillor Sheen agrees that 'Highway 10 continues to be a very busy highway with ever increasing volumes of traffic.'

Perhaps he and other Councillors will add their voice to the advocacy work because with both commuters and heavy truck traffic rising exponentially, if approved a new quarry will only exacerbate the problem. Credit where it is due but let's keep up the push for change.

In other news, I fear yet more traffic trouble is headed our way. It appears that roads previously designated as 'haulage routes' are henceforth to be known as a Strategic Goods Movement Network (SGMN). That's a mouthful. A cynic (ok, me) might think this is not a 'rose by any other name would smell as sweet' scenario, but rather, an attempt at labelling something as a 'strategic goods' movement network provides a workaround allowing pits and quarries to use whatever roads suit them best (such as the completely unsafe use of Main Street through downtown Alton running within just a few metres of an elementary school, a retirement home and

places of business) because what they are ?moving? are considered ?strategic goods.?

Still on the topic of traffic, my final comments are ?credit is due,? served with a side of snark.

Adding their voices to the many calling for an overhead crosswalk or a set of traffic lights at the intersection of Stowmarket and Kennedy Road in Southfields, a group of area seniors met a while ago with Mayor Groves to share their concerns. So, this is first, a thank you to the Mayor for making time in her busy schedule to meet personally with those residents. There are genuine concerns about this portion of our Caledon roadways and with both seniors walking, and children heading to school, forming a significant portion of the pedestrian traffic in an area where stop sign running occurs regularly at high speeds, something must be done sooner than later.

Since the meeting, however, as the saying goes, it's been ?crickets.? Things take time, we all understand that, but let's not wait until someone is injured or worse. There have already been too many close calls. Whether it was already scheduled work, or a social media posting by Councillor Sheen last year, the offer to paint ?more visible? crosswalk lines was made but that will do nothing to disrupt the flow of traffic, particularly so in winter when those lines will be anything BUT visible.

It's time to do the right thing and listen to our elders who really do know better. Make this intersection safe please, Mayor Groves. I'm going to go ahead and give credit where credit is due and hope that you'll recognize (when no one else seems to be listening) the importance of a ?safety first? attitude at this particular location. Older adults and young children's lives depend on it.