

Thompson and council take office

By Bill Rea

It's official. Allan Thompson is the Mayor of the Town of Caledon.

Thompson, 53, was sworn in as the Town's seventh mayor Tuesday night by former mayor (now Justice of the Peace) Carol Seglins. She also administered the Declarations of office to the eight members of Town council, including rookies Barb Shaughnessy, Johanna Downey and Jennifer Innis, as well as Annette Groves, who has returned to council after a four-year absence.

In his inaugural address, Thompson expressed his thanks to his family and supporters.

He also paid tribute to retiring mayor Marolyn Morrison, as well as departing councillors Richard Paterak, Richard Whitehead and Patti Foley for their service to the municipality.

"I believe Caledon's future is bright," Thompson declared.

Thompson raised the notion of the TV show ER, but suggested a change of the meaning of those initials to "empowerment" and "respect," adding that should also apply to council and staff.

"ER" will advance the goal to roll up the red tape and roll out the red carpet," he said, stressing the need to create a climate that the Town is open.

He said he plans to re-introduce committees of council, and increase public involvement. He also repeated an election night pledge to bring high-speed internet to Caledon.

"We have heard the residents well," he said, adding residents are committed to the uniqueness of Caledon.

Thompson observed that about 81 per cent of the land in Caledon is protected by various provincial planning documents, meaning it's important to take care of the other 19 per cent, and make sure it's planned well.

"It's critical that we get it right, and the time is now," he declared.

He also stressed the need for unity, pointing out Bolton can only be strong if Inglewood is strong too.

"We're all on the same side here," he remarked. "We're each committed to you, all of you and the community that we treasure."

Peel Regional council is set to have its inaugural meeting tonight (Thursday), and the main order of business will be to elect a new Chair and CEO, replacing the retiring Emil Kolb.

Thompson observed there have been calls to reduce Caledon's representation at the Region. He's committed to resist such efforts. "I know my council is," he remarked.

Thompson told his Regional colleagues (Shaughnessy, Downey, Innis and Groves) their first vote at the Region might be the most important in Caledon's history, as he urged them to elect a chair who will keep Caledon strong.

"I believe Caledon's strength is in its people," he told the audience, pointing out council is there to serve them. But the residents have an obligation to be engaged, involved and help councillors do their job.

"Together, we're stronger," he said. "Together, we can."



Mayor Allan Thompson delivering his inaugural address Tuesday night.



Councillor Barb Shaughnessy received the Declaration of Office from former Caledon Mayor Carol Seglins.



Justice of the Peace Carol Seglins congratulated Councillor Johanna Downey as she assumed office.



Councillor Jennifer Innis officially took office Tuesday night.