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Birthday fundraiser

LOCAL PAGE A3



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TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2008

BRANTFORD, ONTARIO

## Coalition seeks to end impasse over land claims

### Proposes property tax solution

BY VINCENT BALL  
EXPOSITOR STAFF  
Brantford

**I**t's what good neighbours do." That phrase was repeated several times Monday during a meeting of local native and non-native businesses seeking to calm tensions around land claims issues.

The meeting saw the unveiling of a proposal by the coalition that calls on the city to pay a percentage of the municipal portion of taxes on new development in areas currently under claim to the Haudenosaunee-Six Nations.

In exchange, the Haudenosaunee-Six Nations would agree that protests on land under claim would not stop construction work.

And, when Canada and the Six Nations reach a settlement to resolve the land claims, the Haudenosaunee-Six Nations would reimburse money paid under the interim peace agreement.

The proposal also calls for some environmental and archeological requirements and for everyone involved to press the federal government for a timetable to resolve land claims issues.

City businessman and developer Steve Charest urged people to find ways to at least temporarily resolve the impasse around land claims issues.

#### HURT ECONOMY

"I'm asking you to look to the future, not the past," Charest said to a group of about 100 people gathered at the Woodland Cultural Centre. "We need to look for ways to build consensus, to move the discussion forward and help solve the current impasse."

"It's what good neighbours do." He said that everyone will be affected if nothing is done and the situation is allowed to deteriorate.

"All of us will be hurt if the economy grinds to a halt."

Charest was speaking on behalf of the Haldimand Tract Good Neighbours Coalition, which includes representatives from the native and non-native business and development community.

Charest, president of King and Benton, was joined at Monday's meeting by representatives of Bawa Hotels Canada Ltd., Kingspan Insulated Panels Ltd., Multani Custom Homes Ltd., STM Construction Ltd., and two native-operated businesses, The Abor Group and Two Row Architect.

Charest made it clear that the pro-

#### HALDIMAND TRACT GOOD NEIGHBOURS COALITION

**What is it?** The coalition is a group of developers and businesses that has proposed an interim peace agreement to temporarily address land claims issues while allowing sustainable development in Brantford to proceed without work stoppages due to protests.

**Who is part of the coalition?** Members of the coalition include representatives of King and Benton, Bawa Hotels Canada Ltd., Kingspan Insulated Panels Ltd., Multani Custom Homes Ltd., STM Construction Ltd., The Abor Group and Two Row Architect.

The coalition's proposal calls for:

- ▶ The city agrees to pay a percentage of the municipal portion of taxes to the Haudenosaunee/Six Nations on new development in areas currently under claim.

- ▶ The Haudenosaunee/Six Nations agree that protests that occur on land under claim will not stop work.

- ▶ When Canada and the Six Nations reach a settlement to resolve the land claim, the Haudenosaunee/Six Nations reimburse monies paid under the interim peace agreement.

- ▶ The province provides a guarantee for monies paid, and that they be requested to actively participate in the program where possible.

- ▶ That archeological assessment for all new development be approved by Haudenosaunee/Six Nations.

- ▶ That all parties agree to urge the federal government to set target dates for resolution of land claims.

- ▶ That all development be based on environmental standards approved by Ontario and the Grand River Conservation Authority.

posal from the group is an interim agreement, but that it still provides benefits for all.

It allows the city to proceed with much needed development and, at the same time, Six Nations immediately receives a new source of revenue and recognition of its interests in the land.

Proponents said the proposal will eliminate friction among Six Nations, Brantford and Brant County, and create jobs.

See CHAREST, PAGE A2



"We need to look for ways to build consensus, to move the discussion forward and help solve the current impasse."

STEVE CHAREST OF KING AND BENTON



"I give Steve (Charest) and his partners credit. They've stepped up to plate with something that's worthy of further discussion."

SIX NATIONS CHIEF COUN. BILL MONTOUR



"I love this city and good things can happen. But we need to take action. And, if we don't do it soon, it will be too late."

DALIP MULTANI OF MULTANI CUSTOM HOMES



"If this is supposed to be an olive branch, well, we'd just as soon you just put a stop to all development. That is the way to get land claims resolved."

BUTCH THOMAS, A SENECA SUB-CHIEF OF THE SIX NATIONS CONFEDERACY

## Proposal finds backers, detractors

BY VINCENT BALL  
EXPOSITOR STAFF  
Brantford

Some city and native leaders are welcoming as a "good first step" a proposal that aims to bring a temporary peace to local construction sites.

But some natives remain unimpressed, urging a freeze on all development until land claim issues can be resolved.

The proposal, by a coalition of local native and non-native businesses, calls for the city to pay a percentage of the municipal portion of taxes to the Haudenosaunee/Six Nations on new development in areas currently under claim. It was outlined Monday at a meeting at the Woodland Cultural Centre that was organized by local developer Steve Charest.

Brantford Mayor Mike Hancock said he won't comment on the proposal's details until he has seen an official statement from the coalition.

"What they were proposing was not shared with the city before they talked about it," he said, "and we were given only two days notice about the meeting, with no agenda."

Bill Montour, the elected chief of the Six Nations band council, said the proposal has merit.

"I give Steve (Charest) and his partners credit," Montour said. "They've stepped up to the plate with something that's worthy of further discussion."

#### "PART OF IT"

He welcomed the chance to speak with the development community, saying Six Nations isn't opposed to development.

"We want to be part of it," he said. In a release, Montour said the band council has gone to court to force Brantford to consult it before allowing development on areas that have been the subject of native occupations and blockades.

Council is seeking an order from the Ontario Superior Court to stop development on lands where the city has failed to consult them, Montour said.

"The city is well aware that Six Nations has claims and interests affecting lands within the city of Brantford," he said.

In the release, he noted the city had applied for an injunction that would prohibit Six Nations members from interfering with development at five construction sites in Brantford.

"The (band) council is very concerned the Brantford injunction is a direct threat to the collective land rights of the Six Nations people," he stated.

Although many others at Monday's gathering spoke in favour of the proposal, others urged a different approach.

#### HALT TO DEVELOPMENT

Butch Thomas, a Seneca sub-chief of the Six Nations Confederacy, called for a halt to all development.

"If this is supposed to be an olive branch, well, we'd just as soon you just put a stop to all development," Thomas said. "That is the way to get

See SLESS, PAGE A2

#### WEATHER

Today: Mainly sunny. High: 24  
Tonight: Cloudy. Low: 14

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#### LOCAL

### SIU investigates man's death after being Tasered

SIMCOE — Ontario's Special Investigation Unit is investigating the death of a man who collapsed after being Tasered by Norfolk County OPP Monday morning.

An OPP news release said officers responded to a call of an unwanted man causing a disturbance in the hamlet of Fisher's Glen around 10:30 a.m.

Police used a Taser on the man, who was taken into custody. The man collapsed upon arrival at the OPP detachment.

See MAN, PAGE A7



Brandi Gee

### Norfolk girl, 14, killed in motorcycle crash

PORT ROWAN — Speed and alcohol are cited as contributing factors in the weekend death of a 14-year-old Port Rowan girl.

Brandi Gee was thrown from a motorcycle Sunday evening on Front Road, just east of Townline Road in St. Williams. The driver of the motorcycle failed to negotiate a curve and collided with roadside guide wires, police said.

The crash occurred around 7:30 p.m. Gee, who was scheduled to graduate from Port Rowan Public School Monday night, was pronounced dead at the scene.

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