

# Councillor jailed on bribery charges

## Corruption, breach of trust also alleged against Gyles



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By DECLAN FINUCANE Staff MN

Mississauga City Councillor Cliff Gyles remains in jail after being arrested Monday on charges of bribery.

Peel Regional Police have laid several charges in the wake of allegations the Ward 5 councillor offered to help pave the way for the construction of a funeral home in Malton in return for \$100,000.

Gyles, 57, a veteran of local politics who made the move to City council from the public school board in 1997, is scheduled to appear again in Brampton court Friday.

Fraud squad and Intelligence Bureau officers, who had the councillor under surveillance since allegations were brought to their attention by a local businessman in January, arrested Gyles inside his car near a Kennedy Rd./Hwy. 401 industrial area at 5:45 p.m.

According to police, \$15,000 in marked Canadian bills was recovered at the scene and a subsequent search warrant at a Mississauga home turned up numerous similarly-marked \$100 bills.

Gyles, also a Region of Peel councillor, has been charged with municipal corruption, breach of trust and frauds of the government.

He appeared in Brampton court yesterday for a bail hearing and was remanded in custody pending a second appearance scheduled for Friday, police said.

Word of the arrest sent shockwaves through City Hall and Region of Peel headquarters.

Peel Police Chief Noel Catney said he called Mayor Hazel McCallion with the news early Tuesday morning.

"She was deeply saddened," said Catney of McCallion's reaction. "Allegations such as these impact on all of us as public servants. It's a tragic and saddening event."

McCallion wasn't speaking to reporters on the matter. She said in a press release that "The City of Mississauga cannot and will not prejudge the merits of these allegations...and the City is co-operating with Peel police on this matter."

Police say the charges stem from allegations that the councillor offered a local property owner his "political influence and consideration on a pending property zoning application" in return for \$100,000.

Catney said the man, whom he described as a "regular businessman",

was uncomfortable with the offer and contacted police one day ago.

The man then set up several meetings — all under police surveillance — at a north Mississauga location in which sums of \$10,000 and \$15,000 in marked bills allegedly exchanged hands.

The \$100 bills seized as a result of a search warrant are believed to be the first payment, police allege.

Constable Harry Tam said that police believe the figure discussed initially was \$100,000, it had been cut down to \$50,000 in subsequent meetings.

The property in question is the former Malton branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, at 3263 Derry Rd. E., just west of Goreway Dr.

City documents show an agent...  
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# Long-time politician charged by Peel cops

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on behalf of the property owner, an Ontario numbered company, is seeking approval to have a funeral home built within the existing facility. According to an official with the City's Planning Department, a company known as Bensasia Funeral Home Inc. has been registered at the Derry Rd. E. address.

The rezoning application was discussed among councillors at the City of Mississauga's Planning & Development Committee meeting Monday afternoon and evening.

No recommendation on the application has yet been put forth by the City's Planning Department, documents show.

Seeking rezoning approval can be a lengthy and costly process, according to City officials.

Gyles, a Ward 5 trustee with Peel's public board from 1980 to 1997, is Canada's longest-serving Black politician, having served a combined 21 years.

In February, 1997, he was one of 13 people to receive an African Canadian Achievement Award, sponsored annually by the Scarborough-based *Pride* Newspaper. The awards have been delivered to people and organizations outstanding in their field since 1985.

The award recognized Gyles, a longtime Malton resident, for his contributions to education and his longevity on the Canadian political scene.