

Seniors fed up with parking lot car vandals

By **LISA TALLYN**
Staff Writer

Residents of a Durham St. seniors' apartment building are fed up with finding dents and scratches on their cars in their parking lot that weren't there when they parked them.

The parking lot of the building— John Armstrong Seniors Residence which provides affordable housing and is run by Halton Community Housing Corporation (HCHC) at 8 Durham St.— is located next to Guelph St., with an opening, which previously had a gate, onto the Guelph St. sidewalk. Many people cut through the lot as a shortcut.

One resident who didn't want her name published, said recently she came out to her car and found a deep, several-inch long scratch on the hood. "When I left the car there it was perfectly alright," she said. "It's very, very frustrating."

She reported the incident to police and took the car to the dealership to have it repaired and was told the scratch was so deep it had gone right down to the metal, and would cost about \$460 to fix.

Her deductible is \$300— so that's what it will cost her to repair the damage.

"When you're on a fixed income \$300 is a great deal of money," she said.

Once she does get it fixed, she's afraid it will just happen again.

"Nobody should hurt your property, they're doing it because they can get away with it," she said.

Another resident, who also



Local seniors are on the warpath about damage being done to their cars, and believe the culprits are using a sidewalk backing onto the parking lot as a shortcut.
Photos by Ted Brown

didn't want her name published, found a deep nine-inch long scratch on the hood of her car on July 7.

"Apparently four or five other seniors in this building received the same," she said.

She had the scratch touched up somewhat and on July 28 found the car had been scratched again, elongating the original scratch by about eight or nine inches. The incident was recently reported to police.

"We are a senior apartment complex and our parking lot is used as a shortcut to Guelph St.," she said. "We are told nothing can be done as it is a right of way. Nobody has the right to destroy or damage property."

In previous years she said the tenants have had drinks thrown on their cars and garbage left behind.

She said skateboarders, cyclists, dog walkers and joggers come through, and onto the property behind the building.

She said one instance another resident saw some

youths walking through trying the car doors to see if they were unlocked.

"Please have some respect; we are not rich seniors. This is rent-geared-to-income apartments. We have reported these incidents to police and are hoping to get video surveillance installed. So beware folks, we are on the warpath," she said.

Another resident has had items stolen from his vehicle and said other cars had been dented when it looked like they had been kicked, and another resident had seen youths jumping on cars.

Detective Sgt. Nick Milinovich said police were initially only aware of the one incident (as the two victims who received scratches to their cars) informed the police under one report.

But police have since spoke with one of the victims and received further information. Milinovich said a community support officer and seniors' investigator plans to meet with the residents to address

the issue.

In regards to the comment made by the one resident about her being told nothing can be done as it's a right of way Chris Mills, the Town of Halton Hills Director of Infrastructure Services, said he believes it's a private property issue.

"If the apartment building wants to close that fence that would be their decision," said

Mills, adding, however, he thinks it would be a mistake because he believes the walkway is used by many of the building's residents. He said he would be happy to speak with a representative from the building.

Shawn Crawford, chief building officer with HCHC was unaware of the incidents until contacted by the newspaper as residents had not reported them to the corporation.

He said when they heard, staff went to the building, spoke to residents and are investigating a possible solution—trying to determine "what best suits our community." He said they are confirming the ownership of the fence/opening.

One possibility could be to reinstall a gate, but they want to ensure that whatever is done doesn't impact residents ability to "move freely in and out of the community," said Crawford.

Police will be vigilant watching school zones

Continued from pg. 1

- 76 others (55 Georgetown and 21 Acton)

- 41 warnings (33 Georgetown and 8 Acton)

Sgt. Paul Davies of HRPS Traffic Services said during the project in Georgetown one driver was charged for failing to stop for a school bus, another for disobeying a crossing guard and there were five charges laid for using a cell phone while driving.

During the project there

were two separate incidents of drivers in school zones in Acton receiving suspensions for registering a warn on a breathalyzer.

Davies said he was very concerned the project revealed there were people driving past stop signs without stopping or doing rolling stops in school zones.

"We might be watching stop signs at school zones a little more vigilantly outside of the project," said Davies.

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