



Expansion of the old Hide House to accommodate western wear has been completed. This new retail space is in part of a rear bay where the Hide House held its successful fashion show last year. Above this area is a platform where leather bags are now displayed, but it is really the beginnings of the restaurant or lounge area. Because of other business opportunities and some design problems the restaurant plan has been delayed a few months but there is still a chance it will be completed by the end of the year.

## Hide House restaurant delayed a few months

Planning for a restaurant at the old Hide House continues, but it appears the project won't become a reality as soon as originally expected.

Hide House general manager Don Dawkins says there is still a "fair to good chance" the restaurant will open by the end of the year.

When the project was first announced in January, Dawkins said they were aiming for a July, August, September opening.

In an interview this week Dawkins said expansion in two bays at the rear of the building is just about completed. One area is being used for furniture display while a mezzanine above is for displays, a reception area and offices. The other bay is being used to display the new lines of western wear as well as crafts.

Above the new clothing and leather product retail space is a platform which is now being used to display assorted leather bags.

This platform is the beginnings of the restaurant which Dawkins envisions could be a lounge or dining area.

The firm has tentative plans to go into leather fur-

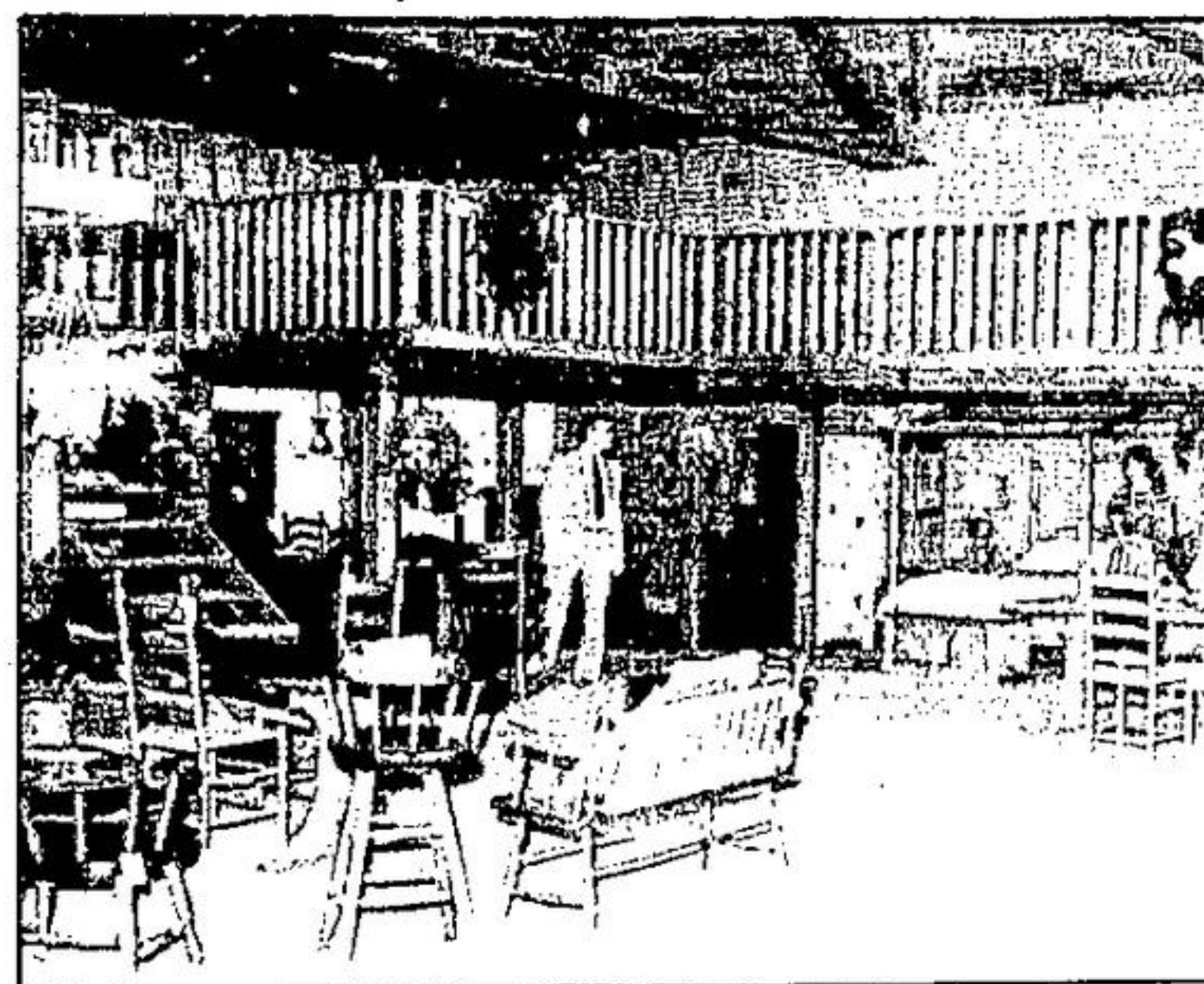
niture manufacturing and leather garment manufacturing "in a limited way."

Dawkins said the owners still view the restaurant project as "highly desirable" but the "existence of other opportunities" in the area of garment and leather furniture manufacturing has resulted in a "re-evaluation of priorities so the timing on the restaurant is uncertain."

The restaurant is envisioned to occupy the ground floor at the rear of the retail area with several mezzanine levels above. As planning for the restaurant has progressed mezzanine design problems have cropped up and must still be solved. Dawkins allowed when the restaurant is opened it may not be in the "ultimate form" envisioned but there will be provisions "to reach it (the ultimate form)."

Dawkins said they are still planning for a quality dining establishment with probably a beef and seafood menu.

Because of the uncertainty of timing the "necessary applications for LLBO and municipal approvals have been held up."



The old Hide House expansion is completed and there is now a tremendous furniture display area. The mezzanine is for displays, a reception area and offices.

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A cast of about 50 Acton High School students have been working hard for many weeks to prepare for their presentation of the musical Superman which opens tonight and runs tomorrow and Friday evenings as well. Shown here are, front, Superman, Andreas Thiel; Ron Skeffington, Steve Saxon and Adela Rodriguez.

Back, Helen Robertson, Norm Bourassa, Carolyn Gibson, Norm Harris, Glenn Lott, Jeff Goebel, Mark Woalsie and Cheryl Lindsay.

Photo by LYNDIA HALL

## 1,005 homes, 3,390 people

# Golf course part of plan

A second golf course for Acton is part of revamped plans for a huge proposed development north of Highway 7 between Churchill Rd. North and the Fourth Line.

The Acton Heights Development Plan, a nine page document plus a site plan, is in the hands of municipal staff awaiting the completion of the current study of sewage capacity and urban boundaries for Acton.

As the urban boundaries now stand the \$47 acre, 1,005 unit single family low density home and clustered residential estates development, which would add about 3,390 people to Acton's population, is outside the area which can be serviced by the municipal water and sewer system.

"It is purely a proposal at this point," Colin Ager, general manager of the development firm, Rinarin Ltd., Brampton, said in an interview this week.

Ager is very familiar with the Acton area, having lived here for about eight years during the 70s. This is the most recent in a number of proposals and studies done on this property in the last 10 years.

Ager said while it is similar to previous studies this is a new proposal.

Completed in February, this study suggests for the first time an executive golf course for the north part of the site, he said.

Also, previous proposals have included semi-detached homes and townhouses. This plan contains

single family homes on larger lots built in two phases to the south of the site. The third phase, which includes the golf course, would contain 115 clustered residential estates. Because of the larger lots the population density is lower than in previous proposals.

The fate of this proposal hinges on if there is sewage capacity left in the Acton plant for more development and if the urban servicing boundary is moved east of Churchill Rd. North and north of Highway 7.

Indications in the past have been that there isn't capacity left, in fact Acton may be over capacity now for existing and approved developments.

However, the final answer is pending completion of the servicing study, expected this spring.

Ager said the answer from the study is positive, that there is capacity, then they'll be pushing to have the proposal classified a registered plan by the municipality.

If the answer from the study is negative, then it will be back to the drawing board. An last resort the property could maybe be developed on septic tanks, with of course a much lower population density and far fewer homes. Ager said the firm hasn't looked at the possibility of developing the land on septic tanks. "we'll cross that bridge when we come to it."

Phase one, behind homes on Churchill Rd. North and churches and Tyler Travel and Transport on Highway 7, would cover 90 acres, contain 400 homes, have a population density of 15 people per acre and house about 1,350 people.

Phase two, on vacant land behind homes on Highway 7 and the Fourth Line, is 128 acres with 490 homes. The population density would be 13 people

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# Council rejects Section 86 tax reform Knechtel, Whiting, Grubbe supported it

Halton Hills Council has once again rejected municipal property tax and assessment reform through Section 86 of the provincial Assessment Act.

Controversial Section 86, called market value assessment by many people, was supported by six of the 12 councillors present, not enough to see it implemented in 1982. A tie vote loses.

Acton's three representatives, Councillors Ross Knechtel, Dave Whiting and Terry Grubbe, were joined by Georgetown's Walter Biehn, Harry Levy and Marilyn Serjeantson in supporting Section 86.

Mayor Peter Pomeroy, Esqueping councillors Russ Miller and George Maltby and Georgetown's Mike Armstrong, Roy Booth and John McDonald lined up against Section 86. Esqueping's Pam Sheldon was absent.

The dramatic vote came after 90 minutes of debate and months and months of study and discussion of the issue.

Only McDonald didn't indicate which way he'd go during the debate so when the vote was called all eyes were on him to see which way he'd fall. He said after he rejected Section 86 because there were too many unanswered questions.

However, there seemed to be more voices for support of Section 86 Monday night than at any time when the issue has been raised at Halton Hills council.

Last spring council turned down Section 86 but voted to set up a council-citizen review committee to probe the subject.

That report was brought in by chairman Knechtel in January and several times the issue was discussed but councillors kept delaying the vote.

The most vocal booster, Knechtel, has maintained since bringing in his report that Section 86 is equalized assessment, not market value assessment and is preferable to the present "dog's breakfast" which councillors can't explain.

Noting he has been a vocal booster, Knechtel pledged to donate any decrease in his own taxes to his favorite charity if Section 86 was passed.

The present tax system "is well understood by God" but nobody else. Knechtel branded a system where there are different mill rates and assessment systems in force in each of Halton Hills' three former municipalities as well as "equalization factors" nobody can understand a "dog's breakfast."

He said 70 per cent of all taxpayers aren't prop-

erly assessed. That's the percentage of all property assessment which would rise or fall by over 10 per cent under Section 86.

"How can we keep collecting taxes when we know 70 per cent aren't fairly assessed?"

He claimed Esqueping is subsidizing the two urban areas and those in newer homes and townhouses are subsidizing everyone.

Section 86 assessment can be explained and defended, something that can't be done with the present "accident of history" system. The present sys-

tem is "taxation by confusion."

He said based on a look at 44 Acton homes he determined assessment varies from sale prices anywhere from four to 12 per cent. He added assessment on 45 per cent of Acton homes would increase under Section 86.

Townhouses are the cheapest form of housing, residents receive fewer municipal services and pay maintenance fees; and yet they pay \$400 on property worth \$35,000 or \$38,000. But another home in Acton, a single family residence worth \$60,000, pays

just \$320 in taxes.

"How long are the people living in the cheapest form of housing going to keep cheerfully subsidizing the rest of us?"

Section 86 isn't perfect but it is a step in the right direction towards a fairer system. If Halton Hills moved now assessors would inspect about 50 per cent of properties in the town. However, if the municipality waits for Queen's Park to make Section 86 mandatory then there will be so much Ontario property to be assessed then only about 10 per cent will be inspected.

By the end of the year, Knechtel said, the assessment department figures 75 per cent of all municipalities will be under Section 86. Later treasurer Ray King revealed at the last count he knew a little over 100 Ontario municipalities had opted for Section 86 while there are more than 500 municipalities. It was noted a large number are looking at Section 86, including Halton Hills.

If the town waited for Queen's Park to implement Section 86 it was surrendering control to compensate people who face increases of over 50 per cent, Knechtel warned, and the province may let the region control how it is brought in.

There were no guarantees that after a Section 86 has been in force for a few years the same inequities won't show up, Maltby declared. He said the assessment department has repeatedly demonstrated its "incompetence."

Property tax and assessment reform was a responsibility of the province, Pomeroy maintained.

He said if Section 86 was to work, all property must be examined. The mayor warned people who have upgraded their property and taken out building permits will be penalized while those who have made improvements, but not taken out building permits, might be rewarded for breaking the law if all property isn't inspected.

Pomeroy stated the two citizen members of the study committee he talked to from Acton and Esqueping, Lorne Youngblut and Paul Campbell, don't support Section 86. He said since the province has created the assessment mess it was up to MPP Julian Reed to explain it, not local councillors.

Even the Ontario Municipal Association says Section 86 won't solve many problems, only shift assessment around a bit, the mayor said.

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## First runner-up Miss Sea Maid beauty pageant

Lisa McGrath was chosen first runner-up in the Miss Sea Maid competition last week.

Miss McGrath was crowned Miss Acton Fall Fair by her sister Cathy McGrath, the 1979 winner, last September.

The Miss Sea Maid competition was held Thursday night at the International Centre in Malton. It was part of the Canadian Spring Boat Show held there.

She said she was entered in the pageant by her agent, Miss McGrath is now working full-time in Toronto as a model.

There were 12 contestants who spoke five minutes apiece with the judges and modelled bikinis.



Lisa McGrath

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Holiday lit: Lites photos on pages 2 and B1  
Acton minor hockey Day of Champions coverage on pages B2 and B3  
When this art is up again and on page 3 Dave Whiting explains why  
57-year-old Laine has been crowned as the Acton Rotary Club's student for the Adventure in Citizenship program. More on page 3



Kevin Fabian, Cameron St., was presented with a pin and a plaque by the Halton Safety Council Friday night for having pulled his chum Robert Jennings from the icy waters of Fairy Lake last winter. His family was on hand to see him receive his Life Saving Award.