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Authorized by Val. Rotiers, Official Agent for John Deamer

Hide House exemption challenged

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 open Sundays should be those catering to the daily needs of customers, selling items worth less than \$10.

Instead, Kingdon pointed out, many stores exempted from the Act, including the Hide House, are "involved in scrambled merchandising," offering a wide range of products, many of which are not manufactured on the premises. The true intent of Sunday exemption legislation is to enable stores to sell souvenirs to tourists, he added.

Kingdon explained that the Act was challenged last March when the Solicitor-General's office appealed a ruling by an Oakville justice-of-the-peace in the case of Longo's Fruit Market Garden. The Oakville business contended that its owners' freedoms as guaranteed by the new Charter of Rights were being infringed by the legislation. That case, and the much-publicized plight of Toronto furrier Paul

Madger, led to a Supreme Court challenge of the Act.

Should the court find the Act unconstitutional, Kingdon said, the Solicitor-General has already indicated he will introduce new legislation which would also feature provisions for Sunday openings.

Hoping to raise additional arguments which he did not present to the committee, Kingdon will attend today's council meeting, as will Dawkins and Chapman.

A majority of committee members last week endorsed a staff resolution which, if approved by council, will see a bylaw prepared to extend the Hide House exemption, which expires Sept. 22.

Preliminary findings of the Region's ongoing tourism study, Dawkins told this newspaper, indicate that the Hide House is Halton Hills' only major tourism-oriented business, drawing 95 per cent of its customers from outside Acton, 90 per cent from outside Halton Hills and 70 per cent

from outside Halton itself.

"It's definitely a tourist business," he said. "Our traffic is almost entirely non-local traffic."

Regional planning director Rash Mohammed advised the committee that the Hide House exemption is the longest-standing among the five granted by the Region since 1980 and the only one still outstanding. The Old Glen Mill in Glen Williams did not renew its exemption, and council denied exemptions to Milton's Sister Produce and Business Improvement Area and the Longo Fruit Market in Oakville.

Mohammed said the 30,000-square foot Hide House, which started out in 1899 as a Beardmore warehouse, employs as many as 140 people at peak times and attracts some 200,000 visitors to Acton annually. Dawkins told Mohammed that up to 40 per cent of the Hide House's gross annual sales occur Sundays and holidays.

Mohammed noted that the only comment made during the required 30-day waiting period after an ad was placed in this newspaper came from Kingdon's Association, who said he'd heard concerns from "a number of businesses located in Halton."

The planner also pointed out that Regional policy provides for exemption in cases where "purchase of goods may be incidental to the purpose of the tourist visit... such as sales in restored historical premises or where the visit affords the opportunity to experience an outstanding local, natural or man-made environment."

"There has been no objective evidence put forth... at by the People For Sunday Association to indicate that the Old Hide House application... is in contravention of the Act," Mohammed concluded.



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Two Halton Regional Police constables were to be charged with assault this week. A County Court spokesman said Tuesday that charges were being laid against Constables Brian Farrell and Ray Hendry. Neither the County Court Office or Justice

of the Peace Murray Allen would release the names of those laying the charges until the officers have been served with a summons.

The circumstances prompting the charges were also withheld.

It's a bird, it's a plane...

It's Superman off to get a place in line for the hot Super Sunday Series tickets which go on sale tomorrow (Thursday) from 2 to 8 at the Cultural Centre box office. Featured this year are the Toy Town Troopers, and the Whitey Brothers Junior Jug Band.

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