

# Riding ranch investigation finds council to be faultless

By PAUL DORSEY  
Herald staff writer

A lengthy investigation of a local horseback riding operation by town planning staff has failed to find any fault in town council's handling of applications involving the ranch, contrary to concerns expressed by neighboring landowners.

Neighbor Michael Mooney suggested last month that the town planning board had been irresponsible in its failure to impose controls on expansion operations at the horse ranch operated near Terra Cotta by Annette Milne.

As well as challenging the intensity of commercial-recreational operations already underway on the Milne prop-

erty, Mr. Mooney questioned the manner in which decisions of approval were reached by the town and Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) and charged that neither agency consulted adjacent landowners concerning the development applications.

**BOARD REPORT**

Town planning assistant Brian Murdoch reported to the planning board last week, however, that all applications for land use changes or minor variances had been processed in accordance with municipal and NEC regulations.

Provisions in the Esqueing official plan for recreational activities apply equally to commercial and intensive op-

erations, Mr. Murdoch said. Nevertheless, the fact that the Milne property lies with the NEC's development control area precludes any municipal control over operations there.

"The only authority which the town may have to exercise some control over the activities in the NEC area, such as the Milne operation, is... a by-law with respect to noise, which is enforceable under the Municipal Act by the local police authorities," he explained.

The board, as a result, endorsed the recreational use of the property and directed staff to forward copies of Mr. Murdoch's report and the noise control bylaw to Mrs. Milne

and Mr. Mooney.

The chronology of Mrs. Milne's applications to the NEC includes a January, 1978, request for permission to build a temporary storage building (granted), an April, 1978, application involving a barn and storage implement shed (withdrawn after a hearing), and an August, 1978, bid to allow recreational activities (granted).

Last March, Mrs. Milne applied to the NEC for permission to build a residence, a barn, a garage and tennis courts. The NEC's decision to approve was appealed and a hearing was held in June.

In May, an application for the residence alone was filed and approved. Permission to relocate an existing tennis court was similarly granted in June.

**MINOR STRUCTURE**

Mr. Murdoch said all of these applications involved "minor rural agricultural structures", minor alterations, locational shifts or "new but related structures". As such, he said, town staff simply commented on each without consulting the board or council and submitted input to the

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Emma Martin, 7, and Kim McCallum, 7, both of Acton were enrolled in the Prospect Park Day Camp activities. The two girls donned war paint and costumes to participate in the big parade held in Acton last week as a finale to the summer recreation programs.

(Herald photo)

## Acton industrial lots get green light

The town planning board has granted conditional approval to a proposal for the development of 18 small industrial lots on a 70-acre site off Highway 25 near Acton.

Approved by town council Monday night, the board's recommendation will allow Alteo Construction Ltd. to develop the site on Acton's northern boundary, currently leased for residential and agricultural uses, once studies have been completed evaluating the development's likely effects on traffic flow and site drainage.

The 18 industrial lots will front onto a cul-de-sac road to be constructed to municipal standards and named to the town's satisfaction.

With a formal subdivision application and land severance applications still to be submitted, the size of the industrial lots and their precise configuration have been held in abeyance. Official plan

and zoning bylaw amendments are required.

In accordance with Alteo's site plans, the lots closest to Highway 25 (Main Street North) will be allocated to

light industry and those along the site's south side to industry requiring access to the CNR railway spur which represents the site's boundary.

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