

Roman Catholic Board pushing ahead with EDC by-law

By Oksana Buhel

Joe Birett, superintendent of business services and treasurer for the Halton Roman Catholic School Board, said the board is still aiming towards June 29 as the date when the Education Development Charges by-law will be presented and voted on by the school board. "We're well into the process," he said, "and we hope not to stop things now unless we encounter a serious problem."

This announcement was made despite problems faced by the York Board of Education in implementing a similar by-law. The implementation of the by-law in York Region was challenged by the Metro Toronto Home Builders Association on the grounds of unconstitutionality, but a leave of appeal was granted at Monday and Tuesday's divisional court hearing. No date had been set for the appeal.

Birett explained the Home Builders Association challenged the constitutionality of the by-law, not the legislation. This means the York Board of Education EDC by-

law has been challenged, not its concept.

"Of course, the decision made at Monday and Tuesday's hearing is an important factor to be considered," he admitted, "but one legal way of viewing the situation is that we don't have to wait for a decision to be made at the provincial court appeal."

He added the goal of the EDC is to provide accommodation for new student growth, and the need for this accommodation is becoming greater. "Since 1989, we've had a \$2.5 million cutback in grants," Birett explained. "It's important we use every source of funding available to us so the difference is not conveyed back in the mill rate."

Birett hopes the by-law will be implemented August 1, the same date the Halton Board of Education planned to implement its EDC by-law.

If all goes according to schedule, the Halton Roman Catholic School Board will collect \$293 per residence and 0.19% for commercial lots from developers.

Halton board waits for York challenge before pushing forth by-law

By Oksana Buhel

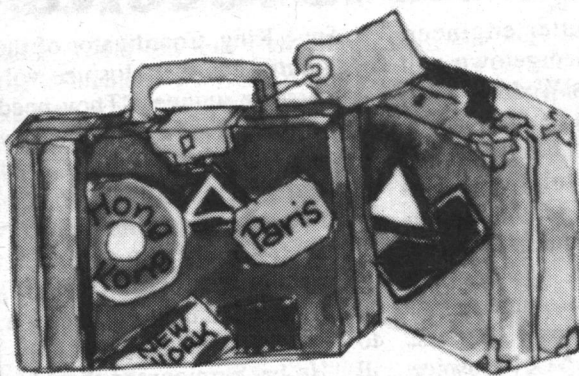
A Halton Board of Education public meeting concerning the implementation of educational development charges (EDC) was held June 3, but because of "legal confusion," no decisions will be made until accusations of unconstitutionality are addressed.

Developers and members of the public in York Region, which was the first region to attempt passing the EDC by-law, claimed the by-law was unconstitutional because it was an indirect tax, and because of the disparity between the amount given to separate school boards and public school boards. In the Halton region, 0.84% of the educational

development charges will be given to the public board, and 0.19% will be for the Roman Catholic board.

Ontario school boards interested in implementing the charges waited for a decision at last Monday and Tuesday's provincial court hearing, held in Toronto, to see if an appeal would be allowed. A leave of appeal was granted, and the York school board can now challenge the accusations of unconstitutionality. No date has been set for the appeal.

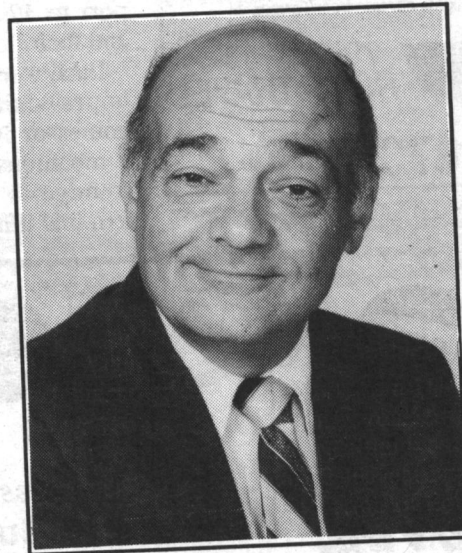
If the by-law is implemented in Halton, developers can expect an additional levy of \$1,297 per residence and .84% for commercial lots, over and above the existing regional and municipal fee.



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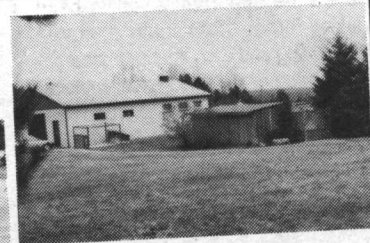
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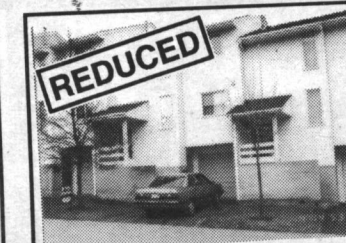
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