

# Elliott calls for report on basement apartments

By FRANCES NIBKLOCK  
The New Tanner

Acton Councillor Norm Elliott has "grave concerns" about the huge number of unregistered second units in Halton Hills houses and wants staff to try to get a handle on the issue.

Provincial legislation gives municipalities to authority to allow homeowners to have second units - usually basement apartments - in their houses, provided safety standards are met. In 1996, the Town passed a bylaw requiring registration of all two-unit houses but in the past two years just 38 two-unit houses have been registered.

Noting that the Town had made a concerted effort to find unregistered dogs in Halton Hills, at Monday's general committee meeting Elliott said not enforcing the two-unit registration bylaw increases or expands the Town's liability.

While Elliott said the term "illegal apartments" shouldn't be used because people have the right to have them, they have to be legally constituted so the people that are renting them are safe.

The fee to register a second unit is \$625 and the homeowner must submit to a fire, hydro and property standards inspections and do any work required.

Elliott said the unregistered units raise safety and economic issues.

"We're basically turning a blind eye to the fact that there's hundreds of units which should be paying some freight because they are taking water, they're putting children in the schools..." Elliott said, adding that they need to put some teeth into enforcing the bylaw and find out exactly how many unregistered second apartment there are in town.

Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson questioned whether the \$625 registration fee was too high and acted as a deterrent to people who should register their second unit. Town staff said it's the potential for increased income and property taxes that stop most people from registering their second units.

"It is probably futile if we drop the price down of the permit fee as long as there is

a concern about the government seeking more tax money and the property tax increasing. Those are real threats, or concerns to the property owner," explained Henry Tse, the Town's Director of Building, Zoning and Enforcement Services, adding that staff haven't been proactive in enforcing the registration bylaw.

Fire Chief Bill Cunningham said that they hadn't tried to ferret out the unregistered units but instead responded to specific complaints.

"If it's Council's wish then between the building department and ourselves we can heighten the awareness and mount a public campaign to identify more of the units than what have been identified to date. I don't think we've scratched the surface on this issue," Cunningham said.



**Sherwood Hume  
Gordon Hume  
Auctioneers**

**HUME'S AUCTION FARM**  
9313 4th Line, R.R. #5, Milton  
Mobile: (416) 543-5242  
Fax: (905) 878-7647 Tel: (905) 878-4878

## VALENTINE

Send a message with Love  
in the Feb. 11th issue of

# THE NEW TANNER



Happy  
Valentine's Day Bill  
Love Sandy

Be My Valentine!  
Ron  
Love Always  
Sharon





To My Favourite Valentines  
Josh, Jordan & Jamie  
Love Mom



Send a Valentine Greeting to your kids, your Grandma, your sweetheart, your friends or let someone know they have a secret admirer!

**ONLY \$8<sup>00</sup>**

**CASH OR CHEQUE ONLY - ALL ADS MUST BE PREPAID**  
**CALL 853-0051**  
**OR DROP IN TO OUR OFFICE AT**  
**59 WILLOW ST.**  
During regular business hours  
**DEADLINE IS FEB. 9 AT 3 P.M.**

*Downtown Spa And  
Unisex Aesthetics/Fitness Spa  
Relaxation Centre*

**FOR HIM**

Hot Tub Session  
1 Hour Anti-Stress Massage  
**\$50.00**

Gentlemen's Skin  
Care Treatment  
**\$35.00**

**Spend Some  
Quality Time Together**

1/2 hour Hot Tub Session  
1/2 hour Anti-Stress Massage  
Choose from Spa Facial or Pedicure  
**\$120.00**  
for Two

**FOR HER**

Be My Valentine  
Hot Tub Session  
30 Minute Anti-Stress Massage  
Manicure  
**\$45.00**

"New"  
Reflexology Massage  
**\$35.00** (1 Hour)

VISIT OUR BATH & BODY BOUTIQUE  
FOR HIM & HER

"NEW" VALENTINE'S LINGERIE  
GIFT SETS, GIFT CERTIFICATES

Full Day or Half Day  
•Spa Packages  
•Bridal Packages

BEAT THE WINTER BLAHS!  
10 TANNING SESSIONS  
**\$40.00**

873-4907

36 Main Street S. Georgetown