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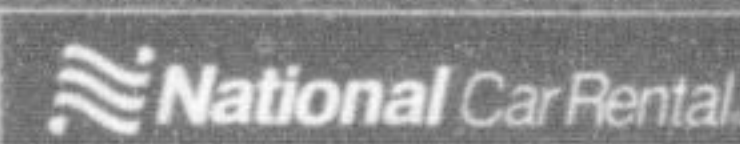
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Proposed new business licencing bylaw draws opposition

By **MELANIE HENNESSEY**
The Champion

Local entrepreneurs came out in full force to Milton council chambers Monday night to voice concerns on the Town's proposed new business licencing bylaw.

The updated document would cover personal service businesses, pawn brokers, travelling vendors (like door-to-door sales), commercial refreshment vehicles, auctioneers, salvage yards, second-hand dealers, food sales and kennels. Currently, personal services and pawn brokers aren't licenced in Milton.

Finesse Permanent Make-up owner Ann-Marie Furness attended the public meeting held by the administration and planning committee to ask if the new bylaw was the Town's way to get more income tax.

"Staff propose to licence personal service businesses for the purpose of consumer protection and health and safety," explained Licensing Administrator Selena Campbell. "We're not trying to create more income tax."

Another local concerned businessperson who spoke at the meeting was Patrick Tiernay, who owns the video game store Microplay.

Since his store is considered a second-hand dealer under the bylaw, he would be required to maintain a transaction register detailing the second-hand goods he receives and who they're from.

He said this would essentially be doubling information he already collects through an advanced software system, which even takes digital photos of people who bring in items to sell.

"To keep a second register would be onerous," he told committee. "It would degrade the service that I offer and I would probably have to hire extra staff just to keep a register."

He added that the register requirement would also degrade his ability to compete with big-box stores.

Under the Municipal Act, businesses may only be licenced for health and safety reasons, nuisance control and consumer protection.

Besides the addition of personal service businesses and pawn brokers to the bylaw, other changes include the requirement for door-to-door salespeople to provide a criminal record check and salvage yards to refuse goods from those 16 years old and younger.

Also, kennel licencing has been taken out of the animal control bylaw and added to the business licencing bylaw.

Under the proposed new bylaw, kennels will have to have six-foot fences, up from the current four-foot requirement, and the Town will have to check for cruelty convictions with the Oakville and District Humane Society before issuing a licence.

Once staff has received all comments from the public about the business licencing bylaw, it will be brought to council for approval.

Ms Campbell said so far, the Town has heard from a number of personal services businesses and kennels. It's anticipated a finalized document will be on the agenda at the December 6 council meeting.

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