

Business owner

Bill may make some landlords pay more attention to property

To have building owners pay municipal property taxes instead of individual tenants may force some landlords out of hiding, says a downtown Milton merchant.

Steve Bonin, who owns shares in Harris Stationery but rents space from his family who own the business, said a greater onus on the landlord could bring them closer to their neighbors and issues concerning the downtown.

Bill 106, or the Fair Municipal Finance Act, addresses residential and business tax assessments, which are to be updated and standardized province-wide. The new legislation would come into effect next January.

Part of Bill 106 calls for the scrapping of the Business Occupancy Act, the result being the takeover of tax payments by landlords.

"Maybe if they have to pay the dollars they'll be around," Mr. Bonin said. "We (tenants) pay a levy now and (if Bill 106 passes) we'll pay them (landlords) in the form of rent."

"There will always be landlords who are fair and those who demand higher rent. As long as there is demand for fair rent, those who are unfair will have to fall in line because the market will demand it."

Both landlord and tenant have valid arguments concerning the bill, Mr. Bonin said.

"Looking from my dad's point of view, he'll be imposed taxes and will raise the rent to cover it,"

explained Mr. Bonin. "The small business owner looks at big box or 'wholesale warehouses.' They don't pay a retail tax levy under the current system. Their tax rate is much lower, it's peanuts. If retailers and big boxes are going to be under equal footing (with Bill 106), then it will make a difference."

Martin Denton, who has run The Salon Group on Mary Street since 1981, said downtown Milton merchants will be hurt by the bill, since it would give landlords certain voting and representation rights on BIA boards.

"We (retailers) wouldn't have much say," remarked Mr. Denton, noting a couple of neighboring businesses are in agreement. "Taxes should be kept in the retailers' hands. I don't know where (the province) is coming from on this."

Priority is on hiring a new manager. Meanwhile, Mr. Denton's top priority these days has been working on a three-member personnel committee, interviewing prospects for the vacant general manager's position within the downtown Milton BIA.

Former manager Anthony Allwood resigned Jan. 21. His position was full-time.

Joining Mr. Denton on the committee are Ted Lindsay, ad manager of the Milton Canadian Champion newspaper and Miriam Hynek, part owner of The Dorland Haight Gallery in Milton.

"Hopefully we'll have someone in place by the end of April," reported Ms Hynek.

Schools win 'green' awards

By KAREN SMITH
The Champion

Two Milton elementary schools were to be presented with environmental awards during a Halton Region-hosted Earth Week celebration at Ontario Place Monday.

St. Peter's and Percy W. Merry schools are among 14 Halton schools to win Environmental Leadership Awards.

Percy Merry is being recognized for a long list of environmentally-friendly activities, said event organizer John Smith of Halton Region.

"Students have used the forest beside the school for nature and science activities. As well they have created environmental awareness among their fellow students and community."

The school's accomplishments include composting school lunch waste, organizing blue box recycling, cleaning up the neighbouring forest, producing skits on recycling and rescuing frogs by artificially maintaining a pond.

At St. Peter's, grade 8 student Jessica Reese was instrumental in starting up the school's Earth Club three years ago.

"She continues to infuse enthusiasm, energy and leadership into the many projects that the Earth Club has undertaken," Mr. Smith said.

"Her leadership has inspired many other members to take an active role in organizing activities that either educate students about the environment or persuade students to do something for the environment."

The awards were to be handed out during Blue Planet '97, a special presentation put on by Halton Region in co-operation with the two school boards.

About 40 Halton schools and more than 700 people including students, teachers, regional politicians and sponsors will attend the event held in conjunction with Earth Week (Apr. 20 - 26).

Canadian astronaut and former Miltonian Chris Hadfield, a NASA space shuttle mission specialist, was scheduled as the keynote speaker, but he cancelled

due to unforeseen work commitments, Mr. Smith said.

Taking his place was NASA colleague Dave Williams, another Canadian astronaut, who was to make an address and then answer questions.

The morning was also to feature the showing of the IMAX films 'Blue Planet' and 'The Living Sea' in the Cinesphere. Participants were to leave with gifts, as well.

"All those attending will receive a Blue Planet '97 ruler made from recycled plastic, a package of flower seeds and a poster," Mr. Smith said prior to the event.

It is funded by 21 corporate sponsors. Students were to be bussed to and from Ontario Place free of charge by Laidlaw Transit.

"It's a neat little event," Mr. Smith said. "The kids love it."

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Notice of Liquor Licence Application



The following establishment has applied to the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario for a liquor licence under the Liquor Licence Act:

Application For Additional Facilities
Belamys Restaurant
575 Ontario Street South, Milton (indoor area)

Any resident of the municipality may make written submission as to whether the issuance of the licence is in the public interest having regard to the needs and wishes of the residents. Submissions must be received no later than **May 23, 1997**. Please include your name, address and telephone number. If a petition is submitted to the Board, please identify the designated contact person.

Note: The LLBO gives the applicant details of any objections.

Submissions to be sent to:
Licensing and Permits Branch
Liquor Licence Board of Ontario
55 Lake Shore Blvd. E., Toronto ON M5E 1A4
Fax: (416)326-5555
E-mail at licensing@llbo.on.ca.

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