

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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5 Traffic cops have heard every excuse in the book.

Briefly3
 Opinion6
 Sports30
 Classified32

BIA tackles absentee landlords

Merchant blames flood on poor maintenance

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

The owner of a successful downtown Stouffville business has had enough.

Sara Marsala, who runs an upscale tearoom on Main Street called Tempst in a Teapot, found her shop flooded after torrential rains earlier this month and was forced to close her business for a full week to deal with the substantial water damage.

A lack of maintenance by the absentee landlord meant the old building's flat roof gave way, flooding the upstairs apartment and the tea shop, she said.

"They are always talking about revitalizing Main Street," she said. "It is a big detriment that we have so many landlords who don't care about their buildings and their tenants. I don't want this happening to the next person coming into this building."

The problem of absentee landlords is a universal one in any downtown or village, Ruth LeBlanc, manager of the Stouffville Business Improvement Area, said.

However, there is now a very low vacancy rate on Main Street, with a greater variety of retail businesses coming in, she said.

"I am trying to fill the downtown with retail rather than services," she said.

See BIA, page 15.

CURFEWS, ZERO TOLERANCE, SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

Vandalism fight underway

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

Imposing curfews on young people to prevent loitering, laying charges for those caught doing drugs or drinking in Stouffville's parks and placing cameras in known trouble spots are some strategies the Stouffville Business Improvement Area was to bring to its board this week.

Some residents have suggested a Street Watch program be initiated, where people patrol the parks when they go on their regular nightly walks.

The recent spate of vandalism, which began in early summer in Stouffville's downtown area, has prompted the BIA to try to fight the problem.

Ruth LeBlanc, manager of the

BIA and co-chairperson of the Stouffville Community Policing Centre, has been hearing from numerous residents that something must be done.

"We want to take back the streets," she said.

Mayor Sue Sherban noted this is not a one-group issue.

"Public facilities and private facilities are being attacked," she

said, adding the town can't arbitrarily set the rules. It has to respond to public concerns.

York Regional Police have been alerted to the situation, the mayor said. Last week, police escorted several young people home and laid charges after they were found doing drugs and drinking in downtown parks. The town is willing to investi-

See CAMERAS, page 15.



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

WORLD RECORD BREAKER?

Duco Van Der Beek, 6, nears the end of his four-lap swim at Stouffville's outdoor pool Saturday as part of a group of swimmers across Ontario trying to beat the world record set in England for the most people swimming 100 m in one hour.

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