

Site F

Off the hook — for now

Urged on by the recommendations of its senior staff and three committees, Regional council voted last week to delete a reference to Site F in the terms of reference for the year long assessment.

Site F, at the north-west corner of Tremaine and Britannia Rds. in Milton, has been pegged as the Region's preferred location for a new garbage dump to replace rapidly-filling sites in Oakville and Burlington.

Twice before, Regional council, opposed only by the three members from Milton and Regional staff, voted to carry out the assessment with a stated preference for Site F, despite staff advice that stating such a preference would make the entire process appear biased.

Before Regional council agreed to change its stand however, the move was supported by members of the solid waste management, planning and public works and administration and finance committees.

Even the consultant hired to carry out the assessment argued against starting the process with a preferred site.

"At this time we simply cannot make a site specific commitment to Site F," Peter Walker of Walker, Wright, Young Associates told committee members.

He said a review of the entire 11 sites proposed for a dump should be carried out before the list is narrowed down.

When last presented with a staff recommendation urging the deletion of the preference for Site F from the study's terms of reference, council voted to stay with it, pending comments from Ontario Environment Minister Keith Norton.

In a recent letter to Regional chairman Jack Raffis, Mr. Norton said the Region would do better to produce a broad planning study, rather than an "impact statement" on Site F.

"I believe I can summarize my thoughts on this matter in one sentence," he wrote. "The Region is not likely to advance its objective of establishing a solution to the landfill component of its waste management problem if it limits the current planning exercise to the production of an 'impact statement' focused only on Site F."

He also said a study that examined all possible alternatives to Site F would be better accepted by the public.

Burlington Mayor Roly Bird saw the Minister's letter as simply another political move caused by the intense debate over the topic.

"We almost have to go along with the foot stuffing that has taken place among the Queen's Park people," he said.

Dave Katz, spokesman for the Tremaine-Britannia Citizens Group, was also pleased with the decision.

"That's reasonable news," he said. "We've been saying all along that stating Site F as the preference wasn't the right way to go."

Citizens of the area where the dump is proposed have been fighting the proposal for the last seven years, "and we're still convinced that if we get an honest and fair environmental assessment than Site F will never materialize," Mr. Katz said.

The citizens group has argued consistently that the proper choice for Halton's next dump site is Site A, a tract of land located next to the existing dump in Burlington and currently owned by the National Sewer Pipe Co.

"That has to be a better choice because the Region wouldn't have to buy the land and they wouldn't have to pay the extra trucking costs. It's really a matter of convincing Walter Mulkeiwich and Joan Little about it."

Mrs. Little and Mr. Mulkeiwich are the Regional councillors representing that area.

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