

Landfill talks focus on effect to waterways

At the height of its use the proposed Acton quarry landfill site will produce 150,000 gallons of poisonous leachate every day.

But the leachate collection and treatment system proposed for the dump will be able to collect and treat the leachate to government standards before pumping it into Black Creek, the study group on the Acton quarry dump proposal was told Aug. 4.

Ed Salenieks, a specialist on leachate treatment at Marshall Macklin Monaghan said onsite treatment of leachate is the "preferred option."

Reclamation Systems Inc., the dump proponents, are also considering shipping partially treated leachate to a regional facility based on Lake Ontario, or combining the leachate treatment plant with a municipal sewage plant to handle some of Acton's municipal waste and ease the burden on the Sewage Treatment plant upstream.

Leachate is a highly poisonous liquid produced at all landfill sites. It is produced after rain percolates through the refuse at the landfill site over a number of years.

Opponents of the dump are worried that leachate could escape into Halton Hills' water supply and contaminate the town's drinking water.

All Halton Hills residents draw their water from private or municipal wells serviced by the Amabel aquifer - a huge underground body of water.

However, Eco Logic Laboratories, the consulting firm hired by RSI to conduct the public information process, says that won't happen.

Mr. Salenieks told the study group and about 20 audience members that the leachate collection has been proven effective.

If RSI's onsite leachate treatment proposal is accepted, a series of underground pipes will collect the liquid and carry it to a well at the south end of the quarry. A treatment plant will then bring the leachate to government standards then pipe it into Black Creek.

Groundwater will also be collected separately and pumped into Black Creek, he said.

Bringing the leachate into government standards, will require a treatment plant costing about \$3 million, said Eco Logic President Dr. Douglas Hallett.

The leachate itself will require extensive treatment. It carries a biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) (a standard of measuring the poison) of about 12,000 parts per million.

Before it's released into Black Creek it will have to be brought down to between three to five parts per million, similar to the levels of treated sewage pumped into Black Creek by the Acton Sewage treatment plant.

By comparison, raw sewage carries a BOD of about 200, a launery creates a liquid containing 1,000 BOD and a brewery's byproducts contain a measurement of up to 15,000 BOD, said Mr. Salenieks.

Ministry of Environment guidelines say 15 parts per million is the maximum standard for treated effluent before it's pumped into a stream.

The leachate would be pumped into Black Creek at a point downstream from the dump, close to Limehouse, where the assimilative capacity of the creek is much greater, said Dr. Hallett.

Upstream, where the Acton sewage plant is pumping its effluent into Black Creek, the stream is relatively narrow and quite polluted, he said.

No more effluent can be pumped into the stream at that point but downstream where RSI wants to pump its effluent into the Creek, the flow is twice as much and the assimilative capacity is quite large, he said.

The creek can handle the 150,000 gallons of treated leachate a day that would be pumped into the stream at that point near the end of the life of the dump in about 20 years time, said Dr. Hallett.

Eco Logic claims that the water quality of Black Creek could actually be increased, if some of the municipal waste currently being treated at the existing sewage treatment plant was channeled to a new facility at the dumpsite, said Dr. Hallett.

It would ease the burden on the part of the creek upstream which has the lowest flow, he said.

The dump will also require an expensive nitrate treatment facility. Tests last year showed that the substance - which, if present in excessive quantities can kill fish in the stream - is nearing the government's standards of 60 parts per billion.

Asked by Committee member Merlin Kobza what effect a sudden huge downpour of rain would have on the leachate collection system Mr. Salenieks said it takes years for leachate to be formed. Leachate increases as a seasonal thing and not as a result of one event such as a large downpour, he said.



"Dog Gonit"
Teaching kids the proper techniques in how to be a guard dog were the performers of the travelling troupe "Dog Gonit" at the Acton Library Aug. 4. The kids learned how to bark, growl and bite, thanks to the efforts of the travelling show. Dog Gonit is part of the Halton Hills Library summer performances which will also feature a magician and stand-up comedian Rob Power on Tuesday, Aug. 16 in Acton and on Wednesday, Aug. 17 in Georgetown. Tickets for Rob Power are \$2 each. (Herald Photo)

Commercial shot for Scotiabank

Georgetown residents may soon see a familiar sight on their television screens.

Scotiabank will use the "small town feeling and atmosphere" of downtown Georgetown in a television commercial.

The crew of Boardwalk Pictures Ltd. began rolling the cameras on Main Street at 11 a.m. this morning (Wednesday) and they will wrap up at 9 p.m. tonight.

But no traffic will be hindered and the street will remain open to pedestrians.

The only things that will be closed off will be six parking spots on the east side of Main Street between Cameron's Fashions and the McGibbon Hotel.

Cameras will be set up on the sidewalk on Main Street in front of the Royal Bank, Union Gas Cameron's Fashions and North Halton Sports.

Merchants in the area of the filming have no objections to the extra activity, according to Ian Cunliffe, the locations manager for Boardwalk Pictures.

"In fact, they mentioned how much more business they do when film crews are in town," said Mr. Cunliffe.

Boardwalk pictures will pay the town \$200 for use of the six parking metres, put up a \$300 deposit to make sure the street is cleaned up after filming, and take out \$2 million worth of insurance for the one-day event.

Beautification plans turning ugly?

Council at odds over civic centre

By BRIAN MACLEOD
Herald Staff

Verbal barbs flew back and forth across the town council chambers Aug. 8 after Ward 2 Coun. Pam Sheldon questioned changes to the new Civic Centre building.

The \$6.1 million building was approved last year but several items, such as a \$12,000 reflecting pool, were eliminated from the budget to decrease the costs of the building.

Since then, a citizens' committee has been set up to raise donations to pay for amenities such as the pool, flagpoles, picnic tables and other items to beautify the civic centre lands.

The Coun. Sheldon said over \$200,000 in changes have been made by the town's five-member building committee, which was set up to oversee construction of the civic centre, without her knowledge.

Changes to the building since the original \$6.1 million approval include \$88,000 for mill work, \$50,000 for excavation under the building to put in a basement, \$12,000 for more insulation and \$60,000 to \$70,000 for a heat pump system.

But much of that will be covered by the approved budget with excess funds from other accounts, said Coun. Cook.

Coun. Sheldon asked for a report on exactly how much money has been spent over the approved budget, what the money has been spent on, and where it's going to come from.

But several councillors who sit on the building committee questioned Coun. Sheldon's motives for bringing up the subject in public.

"I take exception to the manner in which the request was made," said Ward 1 Coun. Norm Elliott.

"None of us were overstepping the mandate that was given to us," he said.

"The way in which this came about was suspect," said Coun. Elliott, who became increasingly angry as he spoke.

The citizens' committee didn't want to be seen as picking up the slack for something council didn't do, he said.

Coun. Sheldon's remarks "casts a seed of suspicion in the public's mind about how this committee was working and I don't think there should be any suspicion," he added.

Ward 3 Coun. Pam Johnston also questioned how the issue was brought up. "I think this thing's abit overblown and I personally think this whole issue has been handled in a tacky manner," she said.

Town Treasurer Ray King said he has "no great concerns" over how the building committee is operating.

But Coun. Sheldon spoke out in her own defence after listening to criticism from her colleagues.

"The mere fact that there has been this discussion means there are some members of council who are not quite sure how money is being spent," she said.

"I did what any councillor would do."

"If anybody has blown the issue out of proportion it was those councillors who got defensive," she said.

"I don't think I've passed discursion on anybody tonight."

Mayor Miller said after the meeting that the report will straighten things out. "I know that

everything we did was above the board. We had the authority to do it."

Councillors did instruct Mr. King to prepare a report on spending, but a motion by Ward 3 Coun. Betty Fisher to ask future spending by the building committee to come through council was withdrawn after an appeal by Coun. Hewitt to leave the process alone.

Asking for approval by council first "kind of destroys the concept of what these people (the citizens committee) are trying to do," said Coun. Hewitt.

"If we have to destroy the hard work of these citizens then I'm not going to enjoy it one bit."

100-year storm disastrous

A major storm, of the type which occurs only once every 100 years, could have disastrous effects on Halton Hills residents if the dump can't handle the extra water, says one committee member.

RSI won't build a leachate treatment plant until the third year of the dump's operation because it takes that long for the refuse to absorb the rainwater and then start producing leachate, said Ed Salenieks, a specialist on leachate treatment.

However, a storm water management program will be in effect as soon as the dump opens, he said.

"You have not accounted for the worst case scenario. Like any big business that doesn't give a darn, you're going to pump it into Black Creek."

Michael Pullen, a specialist with Marshall Macklin Monaghan said he doubts there would be 10 feet of water, but he would check into the scenario.

Uncut grass and weeds unsightly Mill Street neighbors complain

New houses at the corner of Cobblehill Road and Mill Street in Acton are "devaluating" neighboring properties and Bill and Lena Nelles want the town to do something about it.

The couple appeared before town council as a delegation Aug. 8 to ask the town to clean up the boulevard and put up a privacy fence around the four properties on Mill Street west.

The Nelles live across from the properties at 159 Mill Street and thanks to an unusual quirk in town orders three new houses which were built across the road forced an existing property to have its front yard on Mill Street turned into the back yard. The back yard of the property became the front yard on Cobblehill Road so the houses could front onto Cobblehill Road.

Now, the Nelles must look at an unkempt boulevard full of uncut grass and weeds and "unsightly" backyards.

"The people there don't feel any obligation to ever try to do anything with (the boulevard)," said Mrs. Nelles.

Ward 2 Coun. Pam Sheldon wanted to put the privacy fence up

immediately but Mayor Russ Miller successfully pushed for a staff report on the issue, to see if it is legal to put up a fence there.

He also wants the town to talk to property owners first to see if they are agreeable to a fence.

Mayor Miller also said reconstruction of the intersection should take care of the unsightliness surrounding the properties.

"I don't think we're talking about \$1,000. I was looking at figures of \$200,000" she said.

Coun. Sheldon said council never gave the building committee the authority to make changes without going through council first.

After a heated debate the meeting was brought to a halt while Deputy Clerk Delmar French obtained and read a motion from last November, setting up the building committee.

The motion said the committee will "oversee the building of the new town hall and communicating with council when deemed necessary."

That, said several building committee members, gave them the authority to make decisions which have to be made quickly.

The building committee consists of Mayor Miller, who is the chairman, and councillors Al Cook, Joe Hewitt, Pam Johnston and Norm Elliott.

Coun. Sheldon said the building committee has "stretched" its mandate.

"I haven't been able to follow the money that has been spent," she said.

But Ward 2 Coun. Joe Hewitt said everything has been approved by council and the minutes have been circulated to councillors so everyone should be aware of what's going on.

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