

Manufacturing centre proposed

Owners of the Mansewood Industrial Park in southern Halton Hills want to build a 29,297 square metre (315,000 square ft.) plumbing manufacturing and distribution centre on the land.

The centre, which would include office facilities, would sit on the back portion of a 40-acre parcel of land on the north side of Sideroad 5

east of Highway 25.

The Halton Hills Official Plan currently designates the land rural industrial but the project had been put on hold when plans first surfaced in 1987, because that designation had not yet been formalized by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. The ministry has recently designated a 40-acre parcel at

Mansewood rural industrial while holding the designation of the remaining 40 acres under deferral.

That move allows the developers to go ahead with the zoning bylaw application.

A public meeting will be held before any decision is made by the town.

Acton Landfill

Proposal on the table

The company seeking to put a landfill site in the Acton quarry has finally put its proposal on the table.

Reclamation Systems Inc. have filed the final documents with the Ministry of Environment in its bid to build a landfill site capable of handling 20 million tonnes of waste over a 20-year period.

Jillian Daffern, the public liaison officer for Eco Logic Laboratories, the firm handling the proposal for RSI, said that the documents have been formally handed over to the MOE, and that Environment Minister Jim Bradley has notified Eco Logic the proposal has been designated under the Environmental Assessment Act.

The 17 volumes of evidence RSI produced in support of the landfill can be viewed by the public at the Georgetown Public Library on Church Street, the Acton Public Library on River Street, the town of Halton Hills administration building on Trafalgar Road, Halton Region on Bronte Road in Oakville and Eco Logic on Dennis Street in Rockwood.

There are now 55 government officials poring over the documents and those officials will each have input into a government review which will be made available to the public for a minimum of 30 days.

The MOE will then decide if the documents contain the relevant in-

formation for a consolidated board hearing.

The MOE can reject the documents, ask for more evidence, or it can accept them as presented.

The ministry will then likely call a consolidated board hearing, but it is within the ministry's power to accept the proposal for a landfill site without such a hearing, said Ms. Daffern.

the Acton site has twice before been rejected as a landfill site but RSI claims the site can be made safe through engineering.

The proposal has spawned opposition from the citizens group POWER (Protect our Water and Environmental Resources), which says the site is hydrologically unsafe. POWER argues that the dump sits on top of an aquifer which supplies water to about 100,000 people in Georgetown and Milton. The group believes that poisonous leachate produced at the site when rainwater percolates through the garbage, could escape into the water supply and contaminate the drinking water.

Far more is at stake

Before what is sudden, unexpected and least within calculation, the spirit quails, the great Athenian statesman, Pericles, observed.

For the past while, the spirit of modern liberal democracy has been quailing far more than we would like to admit. The sudden shock that befell the Athenian people was the plague. What has stunned Western politicians, publishers, booksellers and writers is the order issued by the Ayatollah Khomeini to murder the esteemed British novelist, Salman Rushdie. Recently, Khomeini renewed the call, saying it is incumbent on every Muslim to use his life and wealth to send Mr. Rushdie to hell. The Ayatollah has hurt Islam more than Mr. Rushdie ever could.

If Mr. Rushdie had lived in Iran and tried to publish his book there, he would have invited the death penalty for blasphemy. But he lives in Britain, a modern, liberal democracy that depends on the rule of law for its preservation.

The West's response has been disturbingly weak-kneed. Publishers in several European countries have stopped printing the book. Last Friday, Coles Bookstores said it was pulling The Satanic Verses from its shelves across the country; Waldenbooks, the largest bookseller in the United States, did the same. Coles' decision did not prevent a bomb threat at its downtown Toronto store over the weekend.

To its credit, the W.H. Smith-Classics chain will continue to sell Mr. Rushdie's book when and if the US publisher, Viking Penguin, sends another shipment. The offices of Viking Penguin in New York and Britain are under heavy guard because of death threats against anyone involved in publishing the book.

UNEASY FEELING

Booksellers are uneasy. "Khomeini's statement is an open licence to any wacko walking around to react," says John Snider, manager of Book City in downtown Toronto. "It's a peculiar feeling. It's not a comforting thought, someone coming in and setting fire to the place. We won't buckle under to fear. But we're not prepared in Canada to deal with issues like this."

Sadly, members of the Muslim community does not seem to



Your Business
Diane Maley

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understand that they are offending our sacred institutions at least as much as Mr. Rushdie inadvertently offended theirs. Shaheen Hussain Azmi, a Toronto Muslim leader, expresses an extreme view: "It is the duty of every Muslim to adhere to Islamic law. And the Islamic law is very clear on the matter of anyone who blasphemes the prophet."

"If there are people who, through their love of the Prophet, get so obsessed they choose to kill, that is a matter between them and their God," says Anab Whitehouse, secretary of the Canadian Society of Muslims.

SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER

For the young men of Iran to go like sheep to the slaughter in the war with Iraq was one thing; for them to go like sheep to slaughter irreverent writers in Britain, the United States or Canada is quite another.

"I have met Mr. Rushdie. He's been in our store," Mr. Snider says. "He's a thoughtful, considerate man, very well respected throughout the English-speaking world." Mr. Rushdie won the Booker Prize, Britain's most prestigious literary award, for an earlier novel, Midnight's Children.

In an article in the London Observer, Mr. Rushdie explains his novel. "I have tried to give a

secular, humanist vision of the birth of a great world religion," he says. The novel explores the transformations of migrants from the Indian subcontinent to Britain.

"This is, for me, the saddest irony of all; that after working for five years to give voice and fictional flesh to the immigrant culture of which I am myself a member, I should see my book burned largely unread, by the people it's about, people who might find some pleasure and much recognition in its pages. I tried to write against stereotypes; the zealot protests serve to confirm, in the Western mind, all the worst stereotypes of the Muslim world."

If the Ayatollah's state terrorism has hurt Islam, it has hurt us as well. Mr. Snider sums it up. "It's an incredibly powerful thing. Once a group is united in a cause and have no fear of repercussions - whether they're Islamic, Palestinian or the Irish Republican Army - they can easily instill fear in a populace."

More than freedom of speech is at stake. International terrorism is testing the ability of Britain to protect its citizens within its own borders. Canada is being tested, too.

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