

# Halton should object to Acton landfill proposal—POWER

The Regional government should not mince words but should object outright to a proposed landfill site at the Acton quarry near Limehouse, a POWER member said Wednesday.

Georgetown resident and public relations officer for the citizens group Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (POWER) John Minns appeared at Halton Region's planning and public works committee to ask the Region to oppose Reclamation Systems Incorporated's proposal for a landfill site at Sideroad 22 and Third Line.

The site, presently being quarried by United Aggregates, could become a landfill site for garbage in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) if approved by the provincial government.

The GTA includes Metropolitan Toronto, York, Peel, Durham and Halton Regions.

In response to RSI's application, the Region prepared a report to the provincial government that says although there are hydrogeological issues to resolve, there is no proof that the landfill site would be damaging.

"No fact or combination of facts has been identified that provide proof that this proposal could not be implemented," says the report.

The landfill site would not include toxic or hazardous waste.

But Mr. Minns argued that well

water and the Amabel Aquifer which serves a large area surrounding the quarry, could be contaminated.

He showed Regional councillors and staff a map of the area surrounding the United Aggregates quarry. He said the old Acton dumpsite is leaking leachate (contaminated water) and that the former Beardmore Tannery lands in Acton also contain contaminants.

"If it is admitted that leachate can kill fish," then it can't be safe for humans, said Mr. Minns.

The water is "at risk," he added. "The Amabel Aquifer is a large - a huge - water supply... once (the dump) is in, you can't get it out."

The Regional report says no landfill should be placed in the Acton quarry until "an alternative source of water is available."

"What we're talking about then, is a lake-based water supply," said Mr. Minns. He added that all of Georgetown is on a well-based system. An area 17 km north of Highway 401 would have to be serviced by a lake-based system to accommodate increased water demands for a landfill site, he said.

This would "severely" affect the Region's 25-year waste management plan, Mr. Minns told Regional councillors.

"All your reports, from your reviewers, show that they cannot support (RSI's proposal)."

But Regional staff said the issue is emotion versus logic. They said it is the Region's role to prepare a logical response to the provincial government.

"To go beyond that... would not be proper," said public works commissioner Bob Moore.

"I appreciate why the residents in the area would like something stronger," but the Region must be "professional," he said.

But the Region's chief administrative officer John Fleming said the report to the provincial government "takes quite a strong position."

Halton Hills Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson asked what would happen if the Region "voiced an absolute opposition to the proposal."

"It's a question of credibility," answered Mr. Fleming.

If the Region opposed the landfill site, "I'm not satisfied I could stand up and justify that position," said Mr. Moore.

But several Regional councillors said the Region must proceed cautiously. "We have to be as pure as Caesar's wife in this," said Burlington Coun. Rob Forbes. "The pressure of Metropolitan Toronto is so intense."

And Milton Coun. Bill Johnson said the landfill site will affect an area greater than Halton Hills if it gains approval.

"It's not just this site. It's the whole of Halton that's in a pickle as

far as water's concerned," he said. Regional director of waste management John MacKay said the water supply is "a major issue... from a Regional perspective."

"Of all the concerns (about the landfill site) that we have at the Region, the number one concern is water," he said.

## GEM conference in Norval wraps up environment week in town

By MICHELLE ROUILLARD  
Herald Special

Canadian Environment Week will be held from June 4-10 and in conjunction with this, POWER (Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources), will be hosting Enviro-watch 2, G.E.M. (the Great Environmental Merger).

This conference will be held at the Riviera Center (Club 2000) in Norval. It will take place on June 10 and 11, with various guest speakers and entertainment. Registration to attend is \$10 for one day, or \$15 for both. This price also includes lunch. A Saturday night dinner is available for \$7. The dinner will include entertainment from such groups as The Halton Hills School of Dance, Georgetown District High School's Theatre Factory, Georgetown Little Theatre, and a dance routine by Alanna MacLean.

The conference objectives include the sharing of ideas, experiences and information on new methods and strategies for fighting toxic pollutants and resource exploiters; to generate positive policies for protecting our drinking water and the environment. Also, to generate publicity for the protection of the Niagara Escarp-

ment, and propose strategy to preserve wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.

A number of speakers have been invited to the conference, including Hon. James Bradley, Minister of the Environment in Ontario; Tom Green, Foundation for Aggregate Studies, speaking on management and regulations; Steven Lester, Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes in Arlington, speaking on the health effects of toxic waste. There will also be a representative from the Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain in Toronto, discussing protection of the environment.

On Sunday, June 11, among other speakers, there will be Dr. D.W. Larson, Botany, University of Guelph; Dr. Paul Connert, Anton, N.Y., discussing incineration practices and effects; and the Canadian Environmental Law Association, Toronto, speaking on defence and protection.

The G.E.M.-Enviro-watch conference is aimed at the general public wishing to express a concern in the environment. Special interest may be for the people who are active in a local citizens group, especially if they want to get a message out; an individual activist, who wants to be part of the movement; a staff member of an

environmental organization who wants to discover how others feel; or a business person wishing to offer a useful service to protect health and the environment, POWER says.

As well as providing sought-after speakers and workshops for information exchange, POWER is organizing a relay walk along the Bruce Trail to increase public awareness all along the Niagara Escarpment. Anyone wishing to protect the Escarpment is invited to take part in this relay. Beginning in the north at Tobermory, and in the south at Niagara Falls, the two halves of a plaque will be carried along the Bruce Trail and passed to each successive group, relay style, until they arrive in Halton Hills and are joined together.

POWER member Rita Landry says: "The conference gives us the chance to stand together and be heard instead of trying to fight our own little battles."

POWER invites everyone to join in the Great Environmental Merger by attending the conference, being part of the plaque relay, or both. Information can be obtained from Rita Landry at (416) 878-7817, or Barbara Halsall at (416) 873-0344.

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