

Local candidates state positions on incineration

As Halton Region is currently considering the establishment of an Energy from Waste Plant - incineration - in Halton Hills, local Liberal candidate Walt Elliot and Progressive Conservative candidate Dave Whiting agree incineration should be part of the province's waste management policy as long as it isn't located in town.

An EFW plant is only a viable option if it is proven to be totally safe, said Mr. Elliot. In other words the plant could be put in the middle of Toronto just as easily as it could be put in Halton Hills. Toronto is where a plant should be located because the plant can only operate economically if it is near the user of the energy industry.

Saying that incineration is a proven form of waste management technology in some parts of the world, Mr. Whiting said he supported an EFW plant over a landfill site. But it should be located in an industrial area as opposed to in the rural area, he added. A plant for the Greater Toronto Area would operate mostly on garbage from Mississauga and Toronto, therefore it should be located in one of these two municipalities, said Mr. Whiting.

Family Coalition Party candidate Giuseppe Gori, like the local environmental group Incineration Counteracts the Environment, (I.C.E.), opposes incineration anywhere. If enough garbage can be eliminated by the three Rs - reduction, reuse and recycling - the amount that is left over could be eliminated using existing microwave technology, said Mr. Gori.

New Democratic candidate Noel Duignan also opposes EFW plants because in reducing certain kinds of waste they create pollution in the forms of toxic emissions and fly ash. Fly ash is the residue created from an EFW plant. The only time Mr. Duignan might consider an EFW plant as a viable option is if all the waste that could be eliminated through the 3 Rs was eliminated.

Similarly the other three candidates agree the government elect should first emphasize the 3 Rs.

"If everybody cooperated - the public, business, government - 80 per cent of the waste stream could be eliminated," said Mr. Elliot. Mr. Duignan estimated the figure to be between 60 and 70 per cent while Mr. Gori predicted the amount to be 90 per cent.

Although Mr. Whiting didn't give a figure as to how much of the waste stream could be eliminated under perfect conditions, he emphasized the first step would be to ban landfills along the Niagara Escarpment and ultimately throughout the province. Next, stringent packaging legislation should be introduced. Approximately 20 per cent of the packaging now being used could be eliminated immediately with effective legislation in place, he predicted. "It's not exactly the free enterprise way but sometimes you have to hit people over the head with a two by four."

Mr. Whiting would also funnel money generated from environmental policies such as the province's existing tire tax into research to find improved recycling technology.

Mr. Whiting would eliminate the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) provincial initiative and the group's sub committee, the Solid Waste Interim Steering Committee (SWISC). The committee's mandate is to develop short term and long term waste policies. SWISC is only talking about the problem, while garbage is still put into landfill sites, explained Mr. Whiting.

In discussing the 3 Rs, Mr. Elliot break down protection of the environment into three components - water, soil and air. In terms of water and soil, the urban population as opposed to the rural population must be more conscientious. Too much of the urban population is carelessly using herbicides and pesticides on their gardens, he said. In turn, these people are destroying the soil and ground water, stressed Mr. Elliot.

He emphasized the agricultural

community "is doing a pretty good job in this area."

As well, the situation is in better shape now with the government's introduction of the Niagara Escarpment Commission to ensure that development does not contaminate the area's ground water.

Mr. Duignan, if elected, would focus his environmental attack on

the producers of waste.

That means introducing legislation forcing companies to reduce the amount of packaging they use. The principle that "polluters must pay" to clean up their mess means "that producers of garbage should pay the bill for dealing with the packaging and other waste they produce. Currently, taxpayers end

up footing the bill through garbage pick-up and blue-box recycling," explained Mr. Duignan.

Mr. Gori also would first focus his attention on reducing the amount of garbage being produced. He'd use education but more importantly the dollar, to achieve their goal. "That's what most people understand," he said.

He explained the sales tax would be eliminated from environmentally friendly products, while it would be higher than it is now for environmentally unfriendly products.

Where applicable, products that had to be disposed would include in their purchase price the cost of disposal, he said.

Green Party candidate speaks out on environment

Patricia Kammerer of the Ontario Green Party is running in the provincial election in protest.

A resident of Campbellville for five years, Ms. Kammerer decided to send a message to government that people are fed up with tax increases, a lack of environmental protection and profit falling into the pockets of developers at the expense of the public.

A member of the Green party for years, Ms. Kammerer would rather have seen someone else take the lead and run as a candidate. But the goldsmith and mother of five-year-old Adrienne said, "my hands are full but somebody has to do it," she said. "No one was taking the position."

While opposition candidates

have funding in excess of \$30,000, Ms. Kammerer is funding herself.

The Green party stands for slowing development whereas the other three parties promote increased development, maintains Ms. Kammerer. Development decreases water quality, affects traffic, soil conditions, raises taxes while the profits are channelled to the developers, she said.

"The money we pay in taxes ends up in the developer's pocket," Ms. Kammerer said. "The existing government is providing profit for the few and the public can't afford it anymore. It's bad planning."

The alternative would prevent industry from taking short-term benefits while the residents are left with finding long-term solutions,

said Ms. Kammerer. "Development brings in temporary jobs and building new plazas only empties the old one," she said. With development comes new roads, increased services and more garbage and water shortage problems, Ms. Kammerer continued. "And we end up with more area converted to concrete."

Questioning government policies, the Green candidate said she is representing an alternative to parties. "I'm running for protest to make alternative solutions available. People have to think differently now," she said, adding that values have to change if there is going to be any future for today's children.

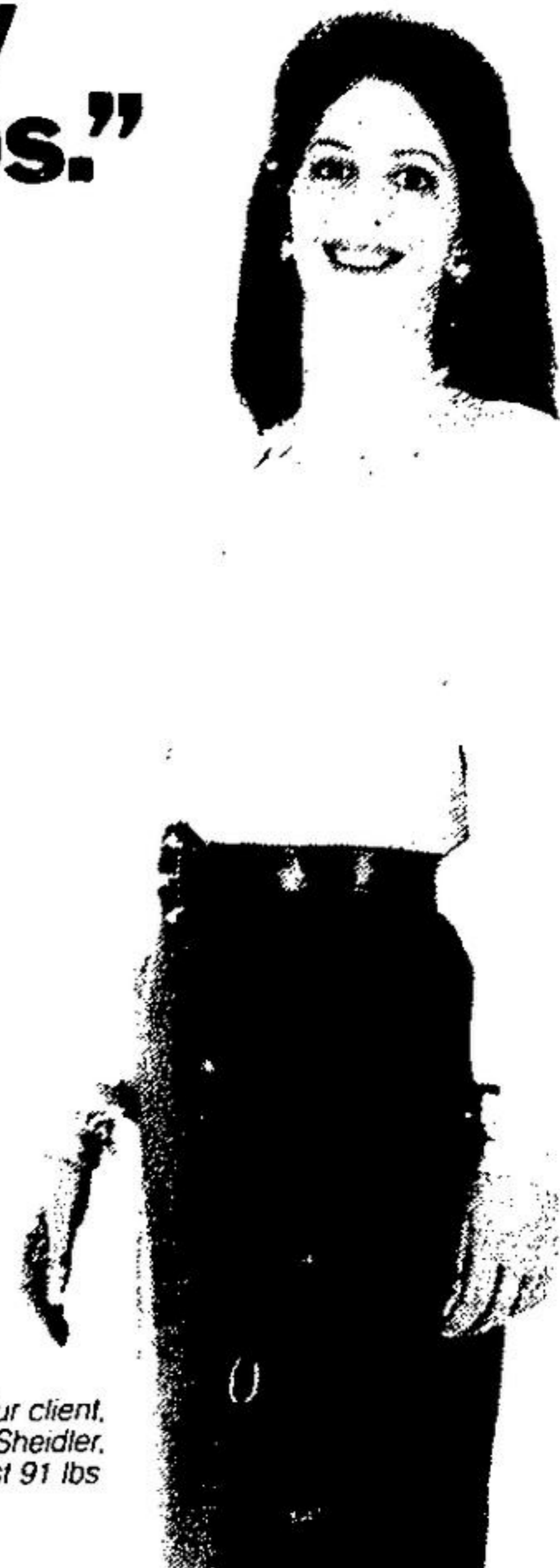
Although she admits she is inex-

perienced in the political realm, Ms. Kammerer said if she did come close in the election "I would have to learn really quick. I have the resources of local environmental groups," she said.

A mistrust in the electoral process, Ms. Kammerer said, means politicians "have to listen to residents and stop pushing policies from the top."

The government has to cease pulling the wool over the public's eyes about safety when it comes to incinerators, said Ms. Kammerer. She is angry at considerations to build an incinerator in Milton, because the ash ends up in the landfills and there isn't room in the landfills. "There are other solutions to garbage," she insists.

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