

Region

More time needed to comment on review

Halton's planning department wants more time to comment on the Niagara Escarpment Commission's five-year plan review than allotted by the commission, according to a Regional report.

Given the complex issue and questions related to the review, "Regional staff is of the opinion that they, (the issues) cannot be adequately addressed in the time set out by the Niagara Escarpment Commission," Regional Planning Director Rash Moham-

med wrote in his report that went before the planning and public works committee Wednesday.

The planning department wants three months tacked on to the already allotted four months to address such issues as: Should development be allowed on the escarpment? and how much commercial development should be allowed so that farming isn't negatively harmed, explained Mr. Mohammed.

As part of the commission's

review of the plan, it must solicit input from several commenting agencies including the Region.

The NEC, under provincial legislation, must allow four months for the commenting agencies to make their submissions.

As for the commission being receptive to making an exception for Halton's planning staff, NEC planner Cecil Louis said, "it's not an off the bat unreasonable request". Permission will depend on the reasons for the request, he

continued.

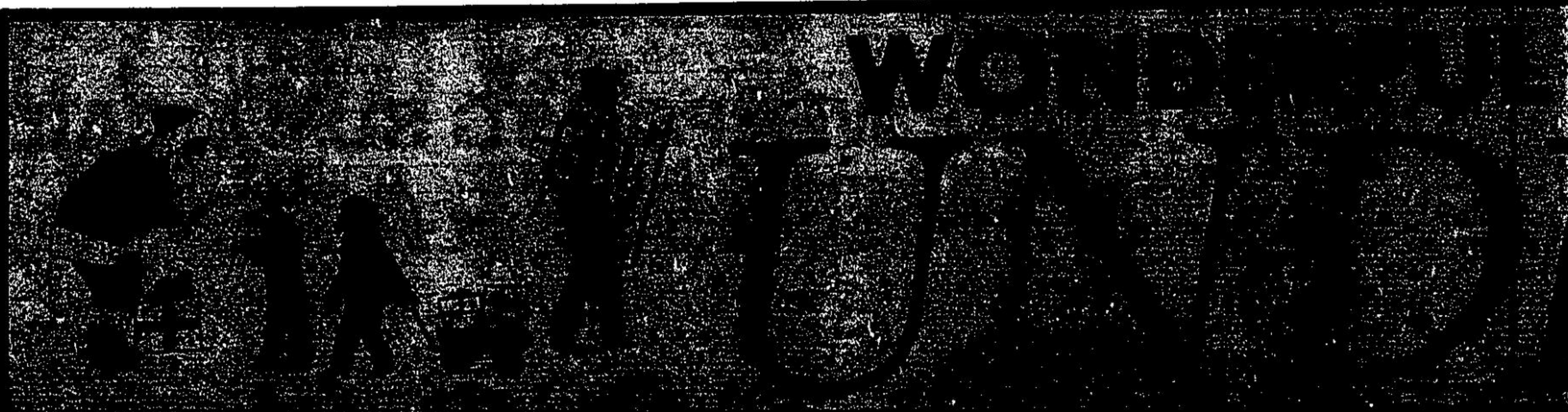
When the Liberals were in power in the province, Mr. Louis said, then Minister of Environment Minister James Bradley wanted the review to be kept on a "tight schedule." But with a new government, the MOE may now have a different attitude towards the review process, he said.

According to the Regional report Halton's four municipalities - Halton Hills, Milton, Burlington and Oakville -

will be requested to support the extra four months.

Glen Wellings, a planner with the town, said the Region has yet to make contact with the town, but he thinks the town's planning staff would support the Region's request. The Region's comments are very important to the review, he said.

If the Region's comments are incomplete, Mr. Wellings said, "you'd have to question the validity of the review."



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