

Environmental Assessment Act is flawed

By BARBARA HALSALL
Herald Special

The provincial Environmental Assessment Act has been described as a dog's breakfast. While everyone would admit that it is better than no legislation at all it has many major flaws. Unfortunately, Halton Hills seems to be stuck with this legislation in fighting the proposal by Reclamation Systems Inc. (RSI), to bring garbage from all of Ontario to the Acton Quarry between Georgetown and Acton.

The legislation was written with municipalities in mind. In fact, the Acton Quarry landfill proposal is the first private landfill proposal to go under the Act. Because the legislation assumes that the proponent of any undertaking will be a municipality, Halton Region and the Town of Halton Hills are not considered official commenting agencies. This leads to a very strange situation where the municipalities that will be the most severely impacted, do not get their comments included in the government review, the Blue Book.

A municipality would not embark on a project unless there was an established need for a road or for a landfill. Therefore, the idea of an investment proposal going to an Environmental Assessment was not considered. There has been no proven need to establish a landfill in Halton Hills. While the Ministry acknowledges that there may be a need for additional landfill space in the province, there is no necessity that RSI be the ones to provide that space. RSI is not a municipality with a mandated responsibility to dispose of waste.

The EA Act requires that a reasonable range of alternatives be considered. The planning must consider: "alternatives to" the undertaking, which fulfill the purpose of the undertaking in functionally different ways, and "alternative methods" of implementing a particular type of undertaking. This would include examining alternative sites. Halton Region started with 55 sites in their landfill search. In fact the Acton Quarry was on Halton's original list but was

eliminated early on because of the risk to our drinking water.

RSI did the process in reverse. They pre-selected the Acton Quarry and then in a vain attempt to meet the requirements of the EA Act, they came up with five other quarries but never did

U of T offers money-saver

University of Toronto researchers have found a way to liquefy and ferment paper garbage to create ethanol, an environmentally sound automobile fuel.

"Converting the paper in solid waste into fuel will relieve pressure on the search for waste disposal sites and save municipalities money by more than doubling the life of present sites," says Professor Morris Wayman of the chemical engineering and applied chemistry department. "In addition, using ethanol reduces the air pollution, smog and greenhouse effects attributed to petroleum-based motor fuels."

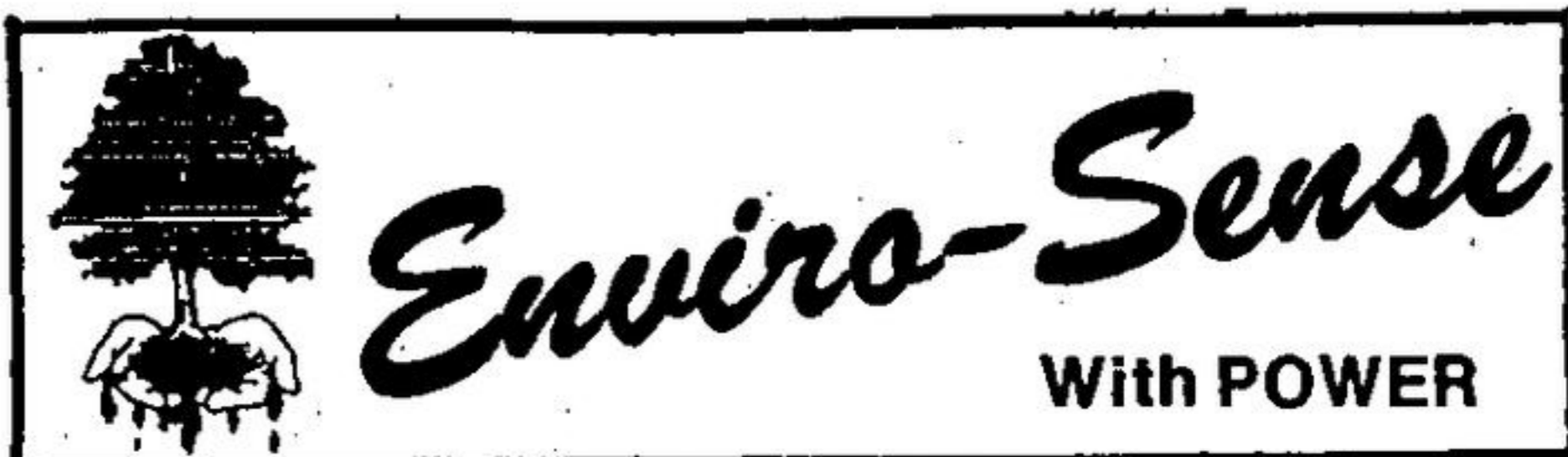
The greater Toronto area alone produces about four million tonnes (one tonne equals 1,000 kilograms) of garbage per year and this garbage contains enough paper to produce 800 million litres of ethanol, explains Wayman.

"In our laboratory we produce ethanol at the rate of 200 litres per tonne. Greater Toronto area garbage can be fermented to ethanol with a current wholesale value of \$240 million," he says.

To facilitate the conversion of garbage into ethanol, metals, glass, concrete and compostable must first be removed from the garbage, leaving only the paper. Enzymes and yeast are then added to liquefy the paper into a solution of fermentable sugars and allow fermentation to occur. Once distilled, the result is the fuel, ethanol.

Wayman hopes his laboratory results will be realized industrially in the near future. Currently his research team is focusing on improving the bioconversion process and developing economical means to produce the necessary enzymes.

The project is supported by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council.



detailed studies on any of them.

The excuse offered by RSI is that not having the ability to expropriate, their decisions must be based upon the ability to access property.

The Niagara Escarpment Commission is reported as saying: "The requirements of the EA Act, in the view of the Commission, should be applied equally to private and public proponents. To do otherwise would be discriminatory and would provide private proponents with an advantage, at the expense of the public interest."

It has been generally recognized that the EA Act had many problems: Halton Region certainly found the legislation very cumbersome. Because of its many problems the Ministry of the Environment embarked on their Environmental Assessment Program Improvement Project (EAPIP).

Because the legislation was so inadequate, at a meeting with MOE in October 1988, Pam

Sheldon requested that the MOE place a moratorium on all private sector proposals, until the new legislation was ready. P.O.W.E.R. followed this up with a formal request but we were told that it was not possible to put these proposals on hold.

P.O.W.E.R. attended a workshop on the EAPIP in February of 1989. P.O.W.E.R. submitted a brief to the Environmental Assessment Board in April of 1991. While we have no date for the proposed changes in the legislation, we will all be anxious to see what changes have been made. We hope that it has been worth the wait.

P.O.W.E.R.'s Annual General Meeting has been moved to Wednesday, December 4th, 8 p.m. at the Georgetown District High School. Lois Gibbs who fought the Love Canal Battle will be the speaker. This is also the evening when the draw for Bateman art will take place. Are you feeling lucky? Everyone welcome.

P.O.W.E.R. special guest

Lois Gibbs of Love Canal Fame supports the citizens of Halton Hills in their fight against the Acton Quarry Dump Proposal and to warn the NDP government of the danger of allowing Private Sector Mega Dumps. Lois Gibbs will be at the P.O.W.E.R. annual general meeting scheduled for Georgetown High School, 8:00 p.m., Wed., Dec. 4.

THE CORPORATION OF THE
Town of Halton Hills
1 Halton Hills Drive — P.O. Box 128
HALTON HILLS (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 5G2
873-2600

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION OF TODD RD. MOUNTAINVIEW RD. TO C.N.R. SPUR LINE

The Town of Halton Hills invites you to attend a Public Information Centre to view the preliminary Design Proposal for the reconstruction of the above-named section of road.

The Public Information Centre will be held as follows:

DATE: Wednesday, December 4, 1991
TIME: 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and
7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

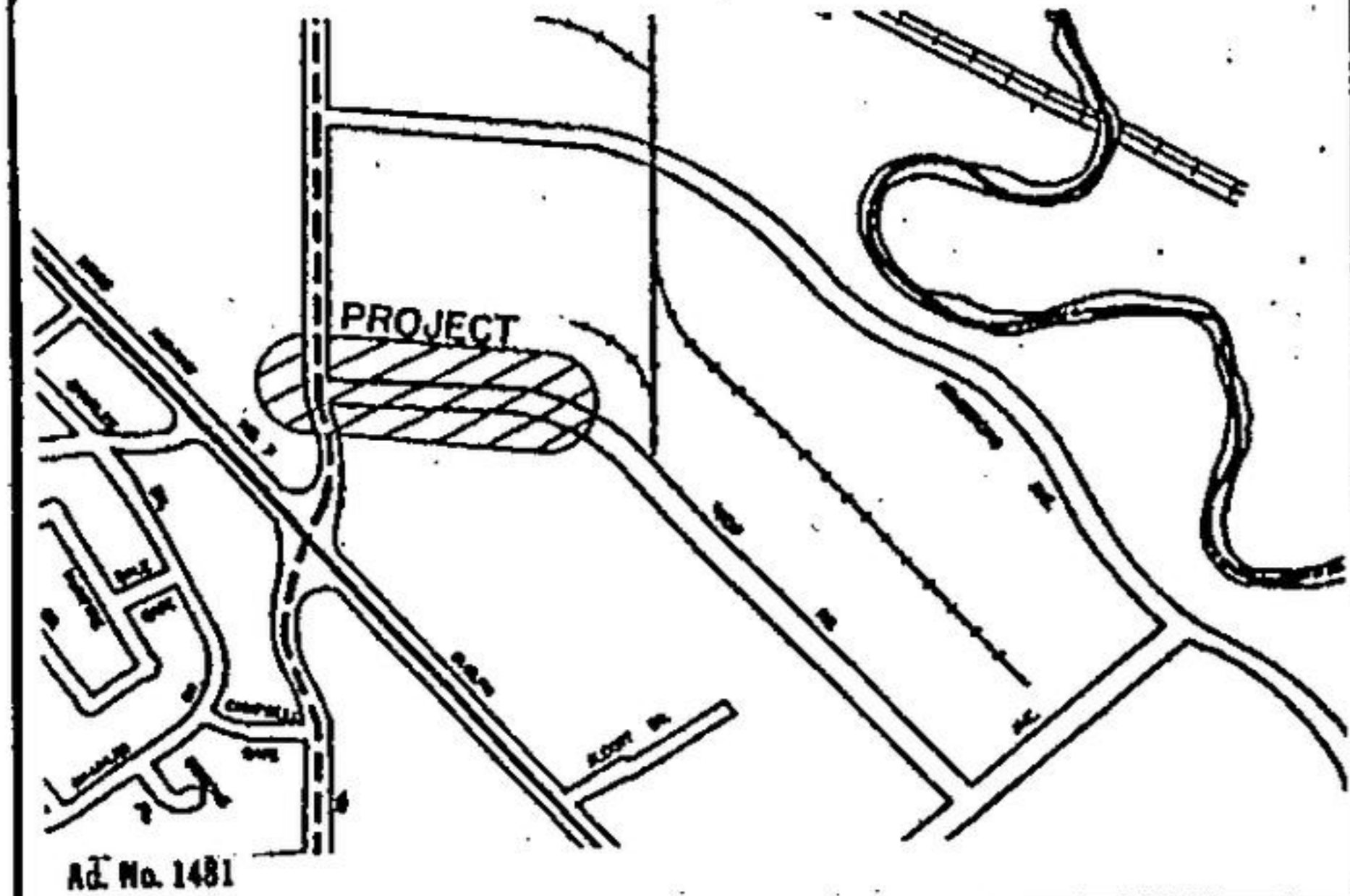
PLACE: Town of Halton Hills Civic Centre
Committee Room
1 Halton Hills Drive
Georgetown

This Public Information Centre will be an informal meeting where plans showing the preliminary design will be available for viewing by area residents and other interested parties. Town of Halton Hills staff will be available to discuss the project. The public are encouraged to attend the centre to review the design and provide comments.

The project is being carried out in accordance with the Class Environmental Assessment Process for Municipal Road Projects.

Inquiries on the project may be addressed to:

Mr. R. A. Goddard, C.E.T.
Town of Halton Hills
1 Halton Hills Drive
Halton Hills, Ontario
L7G 5G2
Telephone: 873-2600, extension 310



Ad. No. 1481

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PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF THE 5 SIDE ROAD CULVERT AND RELATED APPROACH WORK - 5 SIDE ROAD, CONC. 9

The Town of Halton Hills invites you to attend a Public Information Centre to view the preliminary design proposal for the extension of the above-named culvert.

The Public Information Centre will be held as follows:

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Time: 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and
7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

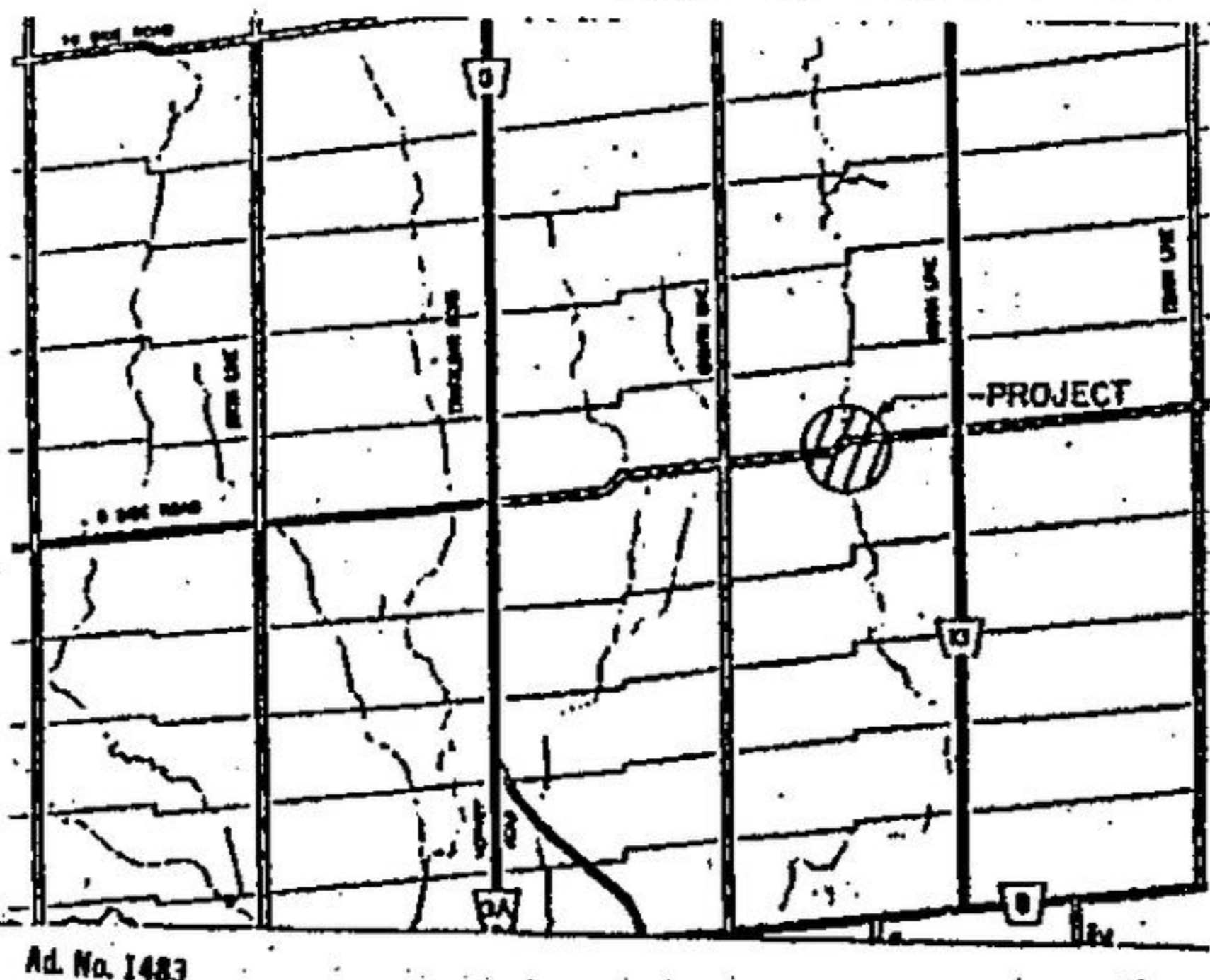
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ECOLINE

by Catherine Farley
Caring for Our Air

OZONE: GOOD AND BAD
The same chemical is both good and bad for us, depending on where it is in the atmosphere.

1. Ozone in the upper atmosphere blocks ultraviolet light and protects us from cancer.

2. Surface ozone, a major component of urban smog, harms plants and lungs.

Burning fossil fuels constantly creates new surface ozone, but because ozone is chemically unstable, it can't move to the upper atmosphere where it's needed.

Source: "Planet under Stress", Royal Society of Canada

Say: "I saw it in
The Herald"