

Pipe dreams

So Halton Region staff has recommended bringing the "Big Pipe" from south Halton as the preferred alternative to service the Town's population growth by 2031.

The Sustainable Halton Water & Wastewater Master Plan identifies a pipe carrying Lake Ontario water north on Trafalgar Rd. to service Georgetown South and Stewarttown areas as the best choice for the additional water required. Through the Sustainable Halton process, the Region chose to increase the Georgetown's urban boundary by approximately 1,000 acres to accommodate roughly 20,000 more people.

Along with the lake-based water the option also calls for increasing the capacity at both Cedarvale and Lindsay Ct. wells. Once the lake water arrives, all of Georgetown South and Stewarttown would be switched to the lake-based supply.

This preferred alternative selection should not have come as a surprise. For years Halton Region has been struggling to find water in the current groundwater well system for the existing and future development in Halton Hills. To squeeze even more water for the additional 20,000 would have been—forgive the pun—a pipe dream.

While POWER contends the area can be serviced solely through groundwater and conservation efforts, we don't believe residents are ready to accept the conservation effort required.

But there are still a lot of unknowns about this Pipe plan—the cost, who will pay for it, and how many developers, who are now challenging the Sustainable Halton plan at the Ontario Municipal Board, will want even more housing.

During the Sustainable Halton discussions many residents were concerned about the impact of the Big Pipe and how it could open the floodgates to even more homes and people. They worried this would destroy the small town character of Halton Hills. A community's character is defined by the people who live there. Many large cities have the feel of a small town, and many parochial villages are as alienating as a big city.

No matter what happens, Halton Hills residents must resolve to maintain this community's character. And all must welcome the new residents who come to live here, regardless of whether their water comes from the ground or a big pipe.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters must include an address and daytime telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

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WEB POLL RESULTS

Do you believe introduction of the 'Big Pipe' (lake-based water) to communities is a detriment or a benefit?

- Bringing in lake-based water leads to too much development (78%)
- Bringing in lake-based water helps communities pay for additional services and facilities (22%)

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Letters to the editor

Majority ignored

Dear editor,
I'm not at all surprised that council has decided to dip further into the wallets of Halton Hills residents to pay for three new arenas.

Whether it's speed bumps on residential streets, or millions towards libraries (in this day and age?), or new arenas, this council has proven largely incapable of saying no to the vocal minority when it's everybody's after-tax dollars on the table. In my 11+ years of living here, the one certainty is that these council members will raise your taxes, often, and usually far beyond the rate of inflation.

But what's been surprising is that we are finally beginning to hear rumblings from the silent majority, as we've heard throughout this debate, yet they were still ignored.

Could it be that in a community with less than a third of voters turning out in election day, that it doesn't matter what the silent majority thinks? In deciding to spend \$29.2 million that we don't have, why wasn't there a debate on the best use of those funds? I live in our fastest growing community (Ward 4) that represents about 66% of Halton Hills population and it's over-represented in children aged 10-19, yet there isn't a tennis court, a proper bas-

ketball court, a skateboard park, etc. to speak of. That said, I'm not marching on council demanding monies that we don't have. Kudos to Councillor Jane Fogal for saying that this arena expense is "out of balance" with other needs in Halton Hills, but really it's out of balance with fiscal responsibility.

The lack of responsibility here is unforgiveable, and hopefully the silent majority will remember this and vote at our next election.

Rui Pita, Georgetown

Fogal for PM!

Dear editor,
It was an interesting process to watch council evaluate the arena proposals.

In the end, one lone councillor, Jane Fogal, did not vote for building three arenas immediately. She preferred that two be built and then consider a third arena, after comparing this need to the Town's overall needs at that time.

Regardless of whether you agree with Jane or not, you have to admire the guts she had in voting against the rest of council. With so much press on the subject, so many representations from arena users and hundreds of kids marching, it would have been easy to give in and jump on board.

We have many wonderful councillors in our town, but I would pick Jane

as a shining example of someone who sees the big picture and balances the needs of all sectors. Jane Fogal for Prime Minister!

Lois Fraser, Halton Hills

Spendthrift council

Dear editor,
What have I learned from this arena decision:

1. Our seasoned council is a spendthrift council intent on legacy building.
2. \$24M of new debt divided by 24,000 households equals \$1,000, with interest, for each household.
3. The hockey community is extraordinarily well connected politically in Halton Hills.
4. Mayor Bonnette depends on Town staff's thinking too much. I guess the mayor has never questioned if some of his staff are empire building?
5. The big pipe is getting closer to reality. When the cost overruns happen on these new projects the developers will gladly step in to save the day.
6. It's very generous of the Town to make users only pay for 20 per cent of the bill.
7. Thank-you Jane Fogal for voting no. You have my vote in 2014 for mayor.

Ian McKay, Georgetown