

Time to fight

Fighting “city hall”, or more accurately, any level of government is never easy.

Often, once a bureaucratic entity such as a provincial government has hired consultants, commissioned reports, done studies, held public meetings etc., it becomes intransigent.

That doesn't mean a group of committed citizens can't successfully get a government to change its mind... it's just usually a tough haul to do so.

Halton Hills residents in the south part of this community now face just such a battle as they— with the support of Halton Hills council— are rallying to get the Ontario government to rethink its position on where to build two new highways.

As part of the GTA West Corridor study, the preferred options are 4-2, which calls for a four-lane highway serving as a north-south link that terminates at Hwy. 401 and Hwy. 407, and option 4-3 which is an east-west link that ends at Hwy. 401, west of Milton at Tremaine Rd.

It is the latter option which has caused great consternation among local residents, as that option would see a large swath cut through rural south Halton Hills between Five and 10 Sideroads stretching from its west border to its east.

A citizen-called meeting last week at Glencairn Golf Club attracted 250 residents— a staggering number, considering most public meetings usually draw less than a quarter of that number.

Residents raised the expected concerns— all legitimate— of decreased property value, the loss of farmland, noise, pollution, and the fear of development over prime agricultural land.

Mayor Rick Bonnette, who is spearheading a fight with a postcard campaign to Transportation Minister Kathleen Wynne, says the 4-3 option offers “zero benefit to the town” but admits “this is a tough nut to crack” because Milton Town staff supports the 4-3 option.

Unfortunately, for many residents they are coming to this fight a bit late, claiming they were unaware of the Province's plans (despite the fact this newspaper has repeatedly reported on this issue as far back as April 2007), until recently receiving a letter from Bonnette.

As former MP/MPP Julian Reed stated at the meeting, this fight is “winnable” and “surely there are options less insane”.

Halton Hills residents have successfully fought and won battles with the Province in the recent past (re: Hospital obstetrics ward closing).

But any fight worth winning is one worth waging.

WEB POLL RESULTS

(Go to www.independentfreepress.com)

Do you plan to participate in the local Canada Day celebrations on Friday?

1. Yes (50%)
2. No (50%)

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Steve Nease

905-873-0301
Publisher: Ken Nugent
General manager: Steve Foreman (sforeman@theifp.ca)
Retail advertising manager: Cindi Campbell (ccampbell@theifp.ca)
Managing editor: John McGhie (jmcghie@theifp.ca)
Distribution manager: Nancy Geissler (ngeissler@theifp.ca)
Classifieds
 Kristie Pells (classified@theifp.ca)
Accounting
 Rose Marie Gauthier
Editorial
 Cynthia Gamble: News editor (cgamble@theifp.ca)
 Ted Brown: Photography (tbrown@theifp.ca)
 Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer (ltallyn@theifp.ca)
 Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports (emaher@theifp.ca)

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Email:

jmcghie@theifp.ca

Mail or drop off:

Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON, L7G 4B1.

Letters to the editor

What about a two-tier highway?

Dear editor,

When I read the letters of June 14 in *The Independent & Free Press* it angers me that there does not seem to be any concern to conserve our farm lands from destruction with the proposal for new 400 series highways across these precious lands.

What should be concentrated on is reducing accidents, horrendous “rush hour” traffic jams with the resultant waste of vast quantities of gas throughout Canada. This is easily achieved by separating trucks and other vehicles as the two do not mix well given the attitudes of some truck and car drivers.

Instead of building new roads, build a second level steel structure covered with old tires with approximately one inch holes to allow rain and snow to pass through— concrete and asphalt does not work— and have trucks, other commercial vehicles and vehicles with trailers on the low road, with cars and pickups on the high road.

It does not matter how wide the road is made. The 14-lane Highway

401 through Toronto proves that, but we have empty skies. Will it be expensive? Sure. But not as expensive as buying the land then raping it to provide a ribbon of asphalt that already costs close to \$1 billion per kilometre of road to build.

Ted Arnott and Mike Chong this is why you were elected. It is time to stand up and say enough is enough, time to think outside the box and conserve our green spaces. No more mutilation, please!

Brendan McMahon,
Georgetown

Good luck, UCHS

Dear editor,

I would like to offer a comment and ask a question on the recent events at the Upper Credit Humane Society.

I am in no way connected with the UCHS but can fully understand that paying \$1,500 per year and \$1,200 per month takes a lot out of a shelter that is funded solely from public donations.

What did the UCHS get from the OSPCA for this money? If it is to use the words “humane society” then I can fully understand their decision to go it alone. The monies would be better spent on the shelter maintenance and animals in their care.

After the past few years I don't

always find the OSPCA a place to look up to, for example the killing of many animals, mostly cats, due to the ringworm infection. It took a public outcry to get it stopped.

As for the one comment I read that once the UCHS goes it alone they will be “just another dog or cat shelter”, I take offence.

I volunteer at one of these independent “cat shelters”. We are a registered charity run by volunteers and we get all our funding by private donations, fundraising and work very hard to keep our charges clean, healthy, and safe until homes can be found for them.

To belittle us because we are not affiliated with the OSPCA is wrong and rude. Many fine independent shelters are out there trying their best to help because of other people's lack of responsible toward their pets.

I am sure that with hopefully more new volunteers, and a more positive outlook the Upper Credit will continue the many good works they have done for their community and the animals they care for until homes may be found. They will at least have more money to do these things with more in their accounts.

From one shelter to another we wish you luck in your new path and wish you all the best.

Debra Hayes, Georgetown