

Regional officials scoff at RSI claims

By **STUART JOHNSTON**
Staff writer

The current divisional court review of an Ontario tribunal's dismissal of Reclamation Systems Inc.'s plans to landfill the Acton Quarry could jeopardize Halton Region's own landfill, RSI's president charges.

However, regional officials scoff at the claim, arguing the company is only clutching at straws.

RSI president Walter Graziani said in a recent interview that if an Ontario court upholds the tribunal ruling in September against his company, Halton's prior approvals given by the same board for its landfill could be revoked.

"From a layman's point of view, I believe projects that have been approved in the past, such as what Halton received for its landfill, could become void," Graziani said. "We've said all along that the way we did it, was the way it was supposed to be done, and past boards supported that. But, from our point of view, if the court says the board had no jurisdiction, then I think it will have to go back to all the other projects that went through a consolidated hearing. That's the kind of implication there is, and is certainly what a lot of people are saying."

Almost two months ago, a consolidated hearing board comprised of Ontario Municipal Board and ministry of environment officials, ruled that it does not have the jurisdiction to conduct a full-blown hearing into RSI's proposal. It reasoned that there were gross inadequacies in the company's procedure of complying with the various legislation, so much so that not enough information existed to properly review and evaluate its plans.

During the preliminary hearing in June, RSI lawyers argued in vain that the process they followed was similar to what Halton Region went

through to get approvals for its landfill, which finally opened last month.

RSI solicitors Richard Hassard and Michael Jeffrey argued at the time that Halton had also skipped a few stages during the process, such as not filing a leachate collection plan under the Ontario water resources act.

But, Halton solicitor Mark Meneray said in an interview last week that RSI's arguments deal with "insignificant points," and have no bearing at all on Halton's landfill.

"In our own landfill, we were meticulous in getting our I's dotted and our T's crossed," he stressed. "RSI's applications were fundamentally deficient, and the cumulative effects of them not following the process only made it worse... The courts won't look at insignificant things. If we had a minor departure from the process, it wasn't to such a degree to impede the board's ability to deal with the issue. And that's the difference... (RSI) thinks the rules were changed for them during the process, but our view is they didn't follow the process properly to begin with."

Ontario Hydro recently asked the divisional court to review the tribunal's decision against RSI. The utility company is planning a transmission corridor west of London, and is going through the same extensive environmental hearing process that RSI was required to follow.

Fearing the hearing board may rule that it also has no jurisdiction in their case, Ontario Hydro has asked the court to determine if they are in the same boat as RSI, and, if so, what needs to be done to get back on track.

Halton Hills, local environment groups, Halton Region and RSI officials are keeping a close eye on the outcome of the court review.



Supporting the cause

The United Way of Halton Hills received a cheque for \$2,378 from Neilson Dairy employees last week. That money was raised through bake sales, raffles and payroll deductions. On hand for the cheque presentation were from left; Neilson employees vice-president of administra-

tion Carl Taylor, Barb Cocks, Nancy Frazer, Deborah VanDoorn and Wendy Farrugia. Representing the United Way were second from right David McNally and Connell Smith, far right.

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