

Little interest in Fourth Line culvert replacement

A "dismal" turnout for a public meeting to explain the replacement of two culverts on the Fourth Line north of Highway 7 convinced the Town to "step up" communications and customer service with affected property owners.

John Kwast, the Town's Manager of Design and Construction said four people (plus a reporter and Ward Two Councillor Bryan Lewis) attended a public information centre last Wednesday on the \$728,000 project to replace two aging culverts, built approximately 75 years ago.

He said the biggest concern from those who attended was the prospect of the Fourth Line being closed during construction. Kwast said at this point, it appears the road will be closed for approximately one week during

the changeover from the old culverts to the new ones. During the rest of construction, slated to begin in May, at least one lane will be open.

Kwast said the increased communications with affected residents will include hand-delivered letters outlining the scope, staging and timing of the project. "This is all subject to what the contractor comes up with for alternatives to see if the closure time can be reduced," Kwast said on Friday, adding they hope to award the tender this spring, begin work in May and be finished by the end of summer.

The affected residents – approximately 30 properties – will also be given the name of a contact to call if they have issues. "I think there is a will with this Council to make sure

that residents understand exactly what we are doing and why we are doing it," Kwast said, adding they will have a full-time inspector available to answer questions and concerns during construction – a "new push we're doing to make sure residents don't get frustrated."

Kwast said the Fourth Line will be widened, improving safety, in the area of both culverts, but they don't believe the widening will increase traffic speed or volume in the area, also a concern of some residents. "This will just increase safety," he said.

The project was delayed for a year as the Town dealt with Credit Valley Conservation and Niagara Escarpment Commission to re-route the tributaries of Black Creek, a cold-water fishery.



'A Canadian Thing'

From a backyard rink built with two brothers in a tough Toronto housing complex more than four decades ago to a front yard rink built this winter on his Nassagaweya estate, Tony Belbeck's love of hockey – a "Canadian thing" – runs deep.

In an effort to relive his childhood, Belbeck carefully constructed the 67 by 35-foot rink, complete with night lights, curved boards and Toronto Maple Leaf and Montreal Canadian logos, at the foot of his property. While he still can't skate "worth beans"

he is getting better, although he admits using his stick as much for balance as to score goals.

"It's been a lot of fun – at Christmas we had 13 people here and we all went skating and played hockey. It's a Canadian thing – it's a lot about our pastime as Canadians – it's who we are – we live, eat, breath, sleep hockey," Belbeck said on Saturday.

Too poor as a boy to play organized hockey, Belbeck remembers making goalie pads from discarded furniture foam, playing until the streetlights came on, wear-

ing a Canadians' jersey and pretending to be Ken Dryden. The father of two grown daughters said building the rink is a nod to his childhood when he couldn't afford to play hockey, and a way to "give back."

A bag of pucks and 10 sticks sit in a small change house by the rink, and as long as they shovel, everyone in the area is welcome to use the rink, but concerns about insurance liability have stopped Belbeck, so far, from inviting local Scouts, Guides or other youth groups to use the rink.

Less garbage and more recyclables in Halton

In an effort to boost the amount of waste diverted from landfill, major changes in Halton's waste management program take effect April 1, including a 50 per cent cut in the number of garbage bags/cans that will be collected curb side every two weeks, and more items accepted in Blue Boxes and Green-Carts.

The changes were detailed in a briefing to Halton Hills councillors last week by Rob Rivers, Halton's Director of Waste Management Services, who said the goal is to divert 65 per cent of waste by 2016, up from the current 57 per cent, to extend the life of Halton's landfill by four years to 2044.

As of April 1, acceptable Blue Box materials will include clear plastic "clam-shell" containers, clear and black plastic take-out food containers, plastic plant and pot trays, plastic plates, cups and cutlery, empty metal paint cans with lids removed, and cardboard container from frozen juice, chips and dough. Mid-March, a larger 22-gallon Blue Box will be available

to handle the increased materials.

Bag Tags

A garbage audit found 15 to 20 per cent of households put out more than four bags/cans for collection and they contain a "significant" amount of Blue Box and GreenCart materials. So, beginning April 1, up to three bags/cans would be collected at the curb. Additional bags/cans – up to three more – will each require a \$2 bag tag.

Rivers said from April 1 to September 7, the bag tags will be complementary, and in Acton they will be available at the library and Home Hardware. Bag tags will also be available online. During April – in what Rivers called a "soft" start, staff will put "Sorry" stickers on additional bags without the complementary stickers and those bags will be collected the next day. From April 29 to September 7, additional bags without bag tags will get a "Sorry" sticker and will not be collected. As of September 9, tags will be mandatory for any more than three bags/cans of garbage.

Telling the public

The Region communicate the changes in a number of ways including newspapers, social media, billboards, movie theatre ads, direct mailers, transit and mall ads. It will also host four Blue Box pick-up events, including one at Acton District High School on March 16. With a drive-through format which takes no more than two minutes, residents will be able to pickup the larger Blue Boxes, Green-Carts, Kitchen Catchers and compostable bags, information kits and sheets of five garbage tags. On March 30, the same items will be available at the Austin Operations Centre on Trafalgar Road in Georgetown.

Rivers said it is "business as usual" for rural Halton Hills residents who are in a "special situation" because they don't get – or pay for – Regional waste collection and handle their own waste disposal. Rural residents won't be able to use bag tags to dispose of waste at the Georgetown transfer station or the Region's landfill.

Exemptions

There are two exemptions from the new rules – no bag tags can be used at townhouse complexes with common garbage piles, and apartment buildings with curb side garbage collection. Rivers said they would work with owners and tenants to look at possible exemptions for places of worship and commercial daycares, which usually have more than three bags to more efficiently deal with the waste and reduce the amount of waste.

No bag tags will be required for the first collection after Christmas, but the maximum six-bag limit will apply. Acton Councillor Mike O'Leary questioned if holiday wrapping paper and ribbons would be accepted in the Blue Box, but Rivers said since it contains coloured ink and chemicals, it is difficult to deal with, and worth less as recycled material.

Diaper recycling?

Rivers said complementary diaper bag tags and healthcare tags will be provided to approved applicants, but the six-bag limit remains in place. Georgetown Town Councillor Moya Johnson noted that other municipalities accept diapers in Green-

Carts and asked why not in Halton. Rivers called it a "smelly little issue" and the Region's anaerobic process does not allow diapers to compost.

Regional/Acton Councillor Clark Somerville said Halton has dealt with the "low hanging fruit" – the easy things to encourage recycling, and asked what the cost would be if the changes were not made. Rivers said they would not achieve an additional 4.5 per cent in waste diversion. He said the "emotional and stressful" environmental

assessment process to develop a new landfill could take seven to 10 years, and cost \$600-million.

Acton Councillor Jon Hurst asked about the status of styrofoam and was told that polystyrene is not acceptable in Blue Boxes because it is a complex plastic that is hard to break down and decreases the value of recycled material. "That's not to say in the future that new markets or new technologies will be able to be advanced and advanced so we can take polystyrene," Rivers said.

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