

Dump plan Town hopeful "the book is closed"

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the next step in the process.

Calling the Board's decision "unprecedented," a Toronto lawyer who represented the Town of Halton Hills at June's preliminary hearing, said: "Hopefully, now, the book is closed."

D'Agostino further stated that if the company proceeds with its proposal, "it'll mean more than just filling out application forms." Detailed applications entailing a lot of background work will be required, he said.

The lawyer with the firm of Thomson and Rogers said the Board's decision represents "a full vindication" of the Town's stance at the hearing. "RSI was not playing by the rules," he said and the Board's decision reflects that by indicating that "the rules (in filing applications with affected agencies) are there to protect the public interest; they're not just red tape."

Meanwhile, Mayor Russ Miller said he and other town officials were elated by the decision.

"It proves we did put up a very good argument," he said. "This landfill proposal is the most ridicu-

Mayor elated

lous thing that has ever happened," the mayor said adding that the Town of Halton Hills has expended considerable time, effort and money in the last several years, fighting landfill sites proposed for the area.

Mayor Miller also offered his thanks to area residents and groups who worked with the municipality in opposing the RSI proposal. He vowed the Town will continue to fight expansion plans to open up more land for quarrying at the Acton Quarry and said the Town will continue to fight any possibility that a Peel landfill will be located on Georgetown's eastern boundary, just north of Norval.

D'Agostino, the mayor and town administrator Dan Costea jointly announced at Wednesday's press conference in the mayor's office that Halton Hills will now seek to recover its costs for fighting the RSI application. Mayor Miller said the Town will try to recoup all costs which amount to close to \$500,000. Written submissions from proposal opponents for recovery of costs will be accepted by the Environmental Assessment Board (EAB) until October 7 of this year.

"We're really happy with the Board's decision," Rita Landry,

president of a citizen's group called Furiously Opposed to Acton Dumping (FOAD), said Thursday. She said the Board's decision gives Halton Hills and Halton Region a chance to adopt or enforce bylaws which will prevent the proposal from surfacing again.

A press release prepared by Landry stated: "FOAD can only be excited about the Consolidated Board's decision if the town and the region take advantage of this opportunity to become pro-active rather than reactive."

In the release, Landry noted that

"Opportunity"

Halton Hills already has a by-law pertaining to the proposed landfill site that isn't enforced. "This bylaw is the reconstruction of the Third Line upon completion of mining operations. This road bi-sects the Acton Quarry which has obvious implications to the Acton Quarry garbage proposal," the release said.

In the same written presentation, it is suggested that Halton Region has the authority to permit or deny waste disposal sites within its boundaries and that the Region, under a section of the Halton Region Act, should preclude all private sector waste disposal undertakings.

The release also suggests that Halton Hills reinforce the Niagara Escarpment Planning Act Amendment 52 which prohibits dumpsites on the escarpment by enacting a municipal bylaw which echoes the amendment.

Landry credited Doug Edward of Brampton, FOAD's lawyer at the preliminary hearing, as being instrumental in designing the strategy that led Halton Hills and Region lawyers to present motions questioning the Board's jurisdiction on the RSI proposal. That strategy effectively blocked a full-blown hearing, Landry said.

"It's a milestone, landmark decision in Ontario environmental law," Edward said of the Board's decision, Thursday. "It will lead to earlier and fuller disclosure of all relevant facts in relation to a (future) proposal (of this kind)," he stated.

While the Board ruled only on motions put forward by Halton Hills and Halton Region on jurisdiction, Edward said the FOAD motion, which focused on the Environmental Assessment Act process, basically followed the theory of other motions. "The applications were incomplete; therefore,

the matter cannot go to a hearing," he said while describing the co-operative strategy of lawyers opposing the proposal.

"The Board's decision is a strong one and not likely to be overturned," Edward concluded.

Pat Woode, president of another local environmental group called Ecology Awareness Group Landscape and Environment (EAGLE), reiterated Halsall's concerns about the possibility of another RSI application for a similar landfill proposal.

"I don't think it's a dead issue. There are some very big dollars involved here and I don't think this company (RSI) is about to give up," she said.

However, Woode stated: "I'm thankful, at this point in time, that the proposal cannot proceed to a full hearing."

"This is a precedent-setting case because this is the first time a private operator has made application through the Environmental Assessment Act to establish a landfill site," Woode said.

The Board's decision has made it "very clear" that applicants must follow the process and "go through the proper channels," the EAGLE president said.

If the decision had been otherwise, Woode speculated, "It would have opened the floodgates for a whole slew of haphazard applications to establish dumpsites on the Niagara Escarpment."



Olympic gold medal winner Shannon Crawford was a guest speaker at the Annual Campaign Kickoff Luncheon for the United Way of Halton Hills last Wednesday at the North Halton Golf Club. This year's campaign goal is \$200,000.

Duignan pledges to stop dumps

Speaking at the town hall press conference, MPP Duignan said, now that the Board has made its decision, he "will ask Ontario Environment Minister Ruth Grier to state publicly that no dumpsite can be located in the Acton Quarry." He also referred to his private member's bill, which passed first reading in June and will come back to the Legislature this fall. The bill says that no landfill site can be located in the Niagara Escarpment (the Acton Quarry lies in the escarpment).

Duignan pledged that he will do all that he can to ensure that "we stop this process (a proposal for dumpsites on the escarpment) from ever happening again."

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