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IWA's "environmental process" worth exploring, Pomeroy says

By Dianne Cornish

Halton Regional chairman Peter Pomeroy suggested last week that the "appropriateness of the environmental process" pursued by the Interim Waste Authority (IWA) in its search for a Peel landfill site bears further scrutiny.

Speaking at the region's planning and public works committee meeting, Pomeroy suggested that Halton

Region might be able to save some money further down the road if it looks at "legal action" now in its opposition to the possible siting of the Peel dumpsite on the Halton Hills eastern boundary.

On Nov. 20, two sites on the east side of Winston Churchill Boulevard just north of Norval made the IWA's short list of candidate sites for the Peel landfill. Next

summer, the five-site list will be reduced to one preferred site which will be proposed for the neighboring region's new dump.

"Why spend another couple of million (dollars) if we can kill this process in the water?" Pomeroy asked committee members.

He later suggested that the IWA is "very nervous about the process" which it has followed in selecting sites for the disposal of waste in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

The regional chairman said the Region might save some money if it "embarrasses" the IWA about "not using a process that's fair."

Under legislation that followed the formation of the IWA, it was stated that the crown agency wouldn't be required to look at alternatives to waste disposal sites, such as incineration. In addition, the search for disposal sites for GTA garbage is restricted to fall within the borders of the GTA.

Members of anti-dump groups have been critical of that approach because it limits options and possible sites for GTA waste disposal.

Regional lawyer Mark Meneray said special legislation (the Waste Management Act) adopted by the Ontario government last year will make it difficult to oppose the IWA and its process.

Board chairman and Halton Hills councillor Marilyn Serjeantson charged that Halton Hills residents were virtually "left out of the process" because the IWA didn't hold a public meeting in Halton Hills even though the Norval area sites will have a definite impact on town residents should one of them be selected as the preferred site.

Noting that the licence given to the IWA is very broad, Meneray told Serjeantson that selection of GTA sites is "a political remedy."

Committee members later authorized regional staff to discuss securing participant funding from the IWA. Meneray was also directed to report back to regional council on the implications of a compensation policy, details of which are expected to be released by the IWA before the end of December.



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