

Reality dictates water supply

By Rosaleen Garneau

Georgetown South will likely be serviced by a lake-based water system within two or three years, since the region has had difficulty finding a groundwater well in the area that meets environmental standards.

On March 24, the Planning and Public Works Committee approved a recommendation from the Commissioner of Public Works, A.F. (Art) Leitch "That the Region of Halton request the Region of Peel to consider the option of an interim supply of water from Peel's North Meadowvale Reservoir to the Region of Halton."

In his accompanying report, Leitch outlined the difficulties of relying on groundwater supply and how environmental considerations are making it hard to secure "water service capacity for existing and planned population in the Georgetown urban area".

He said, "There are so many concerns about groundwater supply that this potential source of municipal water has become a less attractive option". Peel has excess capacity in its Meadowvale Reservoir which is filled by Lake Ontario water. It also has a problem with water pressure which could be alleviated by selling the excess to Halton.

Georgetown South will likely be serviced by a lake-based water system within two or three years

There will be water piped to Georgetown South and to Milton East from the Meadowvale reservoir with the possibility of another reservoir being built in Halton Hills.

Ho Wong, Director of Planning and Development, said an amendment was approved about 10 years ago to give Halton more urban land, allowing for a possible population of 40,000 in Georgetown, about 20,000 more than at present.

Since that time, environmental concerns have restricted the availability of water due to more stringent rules, and now, the necessity to prove no new well will affect area fisheries.

The Leitch report states "The concept of the Peel connection is that Halton Region, rather than attempting to develop additional groundwater sources, would 'borrow' from Peel Region their excess water supply capacity for this interim period (1993-2003)".

The Draft New Official Plan

Waste water information centre

A second public information centre is being held June 21, for the Regional Municipality of Halton's Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for Additional Waste Water Trunk Capacity to service Georgetown. There will be visual displays and staff available to answer questions between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. at the Town of Halton Hills Civic Centre.

At this meeting, M.M. Dillon Limited, consultants for the Region, will present the study team's recommended location for the additional trunk sewer to service Georgetown. The evaluation of the initial four options and details on the recommended location will also be presented.

This meeting follows up on the previous public information centre held February 10, at which time the evaluation of alternative ways to provide additional capacity and the four location options for the trunk sewer were presented. Since this

allows an arrangement with Peel in section B6C14 which states the region may "Consider and permit, on a case-by-case basis...new urban service interconnection between the Region of Halton and abutting municipalities". The Halton Urban Structure Review, (HUSR) however, deals specifically with "overall water system needs and supply".

According to Wong, the region is hoping that in seven or eight years Milton will be on a system using water from Lake Ontario, providing a means to replace the water capacity borrowed from Peel and to supply water to the Georgetown area south of Silver Creek.

In the meantime, each developer has to get approval for building based on the availability of services, including water. The local waste water treatment plant has been upgraded but there is not enough water to support new population growth.

Wong estimates it will take two to three years before the pumps and mains (infrastructure) will be in place to service Georgetown South, if the proposal is approved. Until such time, new lands will not be released for development in the Georgetown South area.

The success of the Peel-Halton water deal depends on the approval of the lake-based water system for Milton by Regional Council, since Halton Region must secure a source to repay Peel before it can enter into an agreement. The recommendation for the lake-based system is part of the HUSR and will likely be presented to council in the fall.

Wong said it is "good using lake water so groundwater won't be depleted further". He understands the concern of Halton Hills residents and those in Milton who prefer to "maintain as long as possible" the well-water system which many people feel supplies water of superior quality.

Not discounted by Wong is the future possibility the region and the town may decide that a lake water system is more desirable or more convenient that the existing groundwater supply and extend the lake water supply to the whole town. However, he added, "The immediate concern is Georgetown South".

time, the Region and the consultants have been working with the Public Liaison Committee to complete the evaluation of the four options. Public input from the first meeting was helpful in this process. The Region is now looking for input on the recommended location.

This Class EA is being carried out because the existing Silver Creek trunk sewer, built in 1959, has insufficient capacity to service future growth areas outlined in the Official Plan. Additional waste water trunk capacity will be required to serve Georgetown West, the western part of Georgetown South and Stewarttown.

This is the second study on the provision of additional waste water trunk capacity for this area. The Region feels this new study with its expanded scope of work will address public concerns.

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