

EDITORIAL

With Frances Niblock



Bad bathroom humour

A local politician once told me that Acton's future was tied "to the toilet."

At the time I thought it was a crude and funny assessment.

Now I know it's true, and it seems like bad bathroom humour. Just when it looked like Acton would be able to grow to at least 10,000 people, the Province pulled the plug.

Acton now faces new, stringent conditions before it can take the half-million gallons of water a day it needs for new development from the Prospect Park well.

Acton's sewage treatment plant, which discharges into Black Creek, already has capacity for 10,000 people and an expanded Regional well at Prospect Park was to supply the water.

But several Provincial ministries and the Department of Fisheries are now worried about what the additional water taking would do to the Black Creek cold-water trout fishery.

They claim the well will cause too much of a drain in nearby Fairy Lake, which assimilates the effluent from the downstream sewage plant, and that will mean poorer water quality for the trout and possible harm to the wetlands.

Sceptical local officials question the figures used to impose the new conditions, and quickly point to the fact that when Beardmore was operating, it took a half-million gallons a day from Fairy Lake to run its tannery, and also polluted Black Creek which now is in good condition.

Regional officials are still studying the new conditions, but admit it could take "millions" to improve the Prospect Park well to allow for growth.

Spend it, if that's what it takes to allow Acton the limited, long-promised growth it needs to survive.

Another report on long-term plans for Halton's growth makes me wonder if any real growth will occur.

The Halton Region Urban Structure Review (HUSR) appears to dismiss Acton, leaving the Town's facility off a map of treatment plants entirely, and targeting north-Oakville and Milton for almost all of the major proposed growth over the next 20 years.

LETTERS

POWER failure

To the Editor,

Steve Dawkins is right when he says it's time to pull the plug on POWER. The people who first led POWER were determined to fight the dump near Acton and focused their protests on that issue. The people who succeeded them, however, focused their energy on protesting.

This focus on protesting for protesting's sake first started a couple of years ago when POWER members chartered a bus to go to London to waive goodbye to Premier Peterson when he was defeated.

The emphasis on protest got worse and the absolute limit occurred recently, when key people in POWER — Barbara Halsall, Rob Barlow and Jean Hilborn — showed up at Town Council and tried to berate and harangue Councillors who don't agree with them about the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

Town Council has spent over half a million dollars fighting the dump near Acton. POWER has never given the Town or we taxpayers much credit for this. That's bad enough, but the shrillness and hostility in Council displayed by these members of POWER can only serve to hurt us in our fight against the dump!

Maybe Steve Dawkins' plea to pull the plug on POWER has come too late — maybe what we've been seeing is nothing less than a POWER failure.

Peter Carter

Courage to speak

To the Editor,

I am writing in response to Mr. Dawkins' letter which appeared in *The Acton Tanner* on March 31.

First I would like to clarify that when I made my presentation to the Halton Hills Town Council on March 8, I was not representing POWER. I was speaking as a member of a much larger special interest group called "Citizen and Taxpayer of Halton Hills." I was trying

ing to say loud and clear *we do not want any more taxes!*

It is very disturbing that citizens of this town are being severely chastised for having the courage to stand up and question their elected representatives for voting in favour of a proposal which will be detrimental to the majority of our community. I am not afraid of being criticized for my personal opinion on an issue. However, I find it very unconscionable when people

LETTERS

"I commit to POWER"

To the Editor,

I was disappointed to read Steve Dawkins' letter in your March 31 paper regarding support for POWER.

As I read his letter I did not become angry. After all this is not the first such letter he has written condemning "the actions of POWER." However, I did feel saddened because while yes, all three persons identified in his letter are members of POWER, two of them were speaking on their own accord, as concerned citizens of our community. Surely they do retain this right!

While not unlike political parties in this country, groups of all sorts often contain dissenting views. Only through discussion can things be worked out.

Over six years ago a guest speaker at our general meeting warned members that others will try to divide and conquer for their

own purposes. We must all remember that name-calling and public assaults only tend to serve those who would see the Acton Quarry filled with garbage, from who knows where!

own purposes. We must all remember that name-calling and public assaults only tend to serve those who would see the Acton Quarry filled with garbage, from who knows where!

President Barbara Halsall, recently one of the 26 members of our community honoured for "their significant contribution to Canada, their community or their fellow Canadians" maintains the same standards set down by the Frenchs and Kirkwoods (who are still active member of the executive). Her tireless hours of work on behalf of our community need no defense. The concerns of POWER members are welcome and their views respected.

As Steve points out, we must stand together to protect our community and in order to do this we need public support for groups such as POWER.

In closing, I would like to say that POWER is an environmental group. Myself, I was not drawn to the group because of a burning desire to prevent a dump. Rather, my major concern was, and still is, our natural environment. In an effort to make a contribution to my community I commit my time and energy to POWER.

C. Rumley

Halton Hills has become my home and I have met many citizens, including the members of POWER, who care very deeply about the well being of this town. I trust it will continue to be a community tolerant of people who have varying opinions and who have the courage to speak up when they see elected officials acting or voting irresponsibly.

Jean Hilborn
Mill Street East



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