

# Pristine blames 'election fever'

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I represent and that the power plant should not be located so close to our residential neighbourhoods."

Pristine is one of four companies that've put forward local proposals for a plant in response to a request from the OPA for a new generating station to meet the power needs of the GTA. The OPA will award a contract to one company November 15.

While Day acknowledged the other proposals, he said Pristine's proposition, "due to geography, seems to have the potential to affect adversely the health of Milton residents."

He went on to liken the power plant companies to "500-pound gorillas."

"How do you fight a 500-pound gorilla? You get your own 500-pound gorilla. That's us (the Town)," he said, holding up a bunch of bananas as a prop to show what gorillas eat.

Day's motion garnered support from his fellow councillors, like Ward 1 Councillor Brian Penman, who said it would be wrong for council to not take a position. He pointed out that he's talked to people in tears about the plant proposal and others who've said they'll sell their house if it's approved.

Wards 1 and 3 Councillor Barry Lee noted he hasn't spoken to one person who's in favour of Pristine's plant.

And Ward 3 Councillor Cindy Lunau said council needs to express concerns about the plant on behalf of the community and that silence from the Town would indicate consent.

Meanwhile, Ward 4 Councillor Wendy Schau said it's difficult to deal with one power project in isolation because there could be a plant proposal farther away from the residential area that may pro-

duce a greater amount of emissions and be more detrimental.

Several councillors and staff also expressed concern with the 30-day time period, which ends tomorrow, that the Town has to respond to Pristine's environmental review report.

Director of Planning and Development Mel Iovio told council the Town and Region are having the document peer reviewed and have asked for a 90-day extension on the commenting period.

He explained that the OPA's contract procurement process and the Ministry of the Environment process for environmental reviews are two separate things with their own deadlines. Iovio also said the other three power plant companies that've submitted proposals to the OPA haven't filed notices of environmental review completion yet and may not do so until after the contract is awarded.

Penman said the fact it's possible for those companies to not address the environment before being awarded a contract shows how flawed the process is.

"If that isn't absurd and that isn't insane, I don't know what is," he said. "I'm mystified by this entire process."

Ward 4 Councillor John Challinor put forward a motion calling for the Ministry of the Environment to grant the Town an extension on the commenting deadline to January 28.

Ward 3 Councillor Jan Mowbray and Ward 2 Councillor Mike Boughton concurred that 30 days isn't long enough. Council unanimously approved Challinor's motion.

Prior to passing Day's resolution of opposition, staff told council the Town solicitor had suggested a motion of prematurity would be the best approach to take. It would advise the OPA

it's premature to award a contract until Official Plan and zoning bylaw issues are dealt with.

Day said if the OPA does approve Pristine, council will still give its applications for Official Plan and zoning bylaw amendments full and fair hearings.

"This (motion) is a preliminary reaction based on what we know now," he said. "We need to be in the residents' corner."

But according to Pristine lawyer Michael Bowman, Day's motion will "prejudice and undermine council's ability, perceived or real, to fairly consider the applications at any future statutory public meetings."

Bowman's letter to council also stated, "For council to consider any delegations or motions in opposition to the applications and the proposed facility prior to the statutory public meeting under the Planning Act would be in breach of its obligations to act fairly and in accordance with natural justice."

Julia Ciccaglione of Pristine said the company has had over 35 meetings with municipal representatives, including councillors, since the beginning of this year regarding the plant proposal, but this is the first time the Town has voiced formal opposition. Prior to that, she said the Town had held a neutral position.

"It's unfortunate that election fever has gotten the better of Milton councillors," she remarked.

Town solicitor Hal Watson said he was unable to comment on Bowman's statement that council breached its obligations, explaining that to do so would put him in breach of his duties as the Town's lawyer.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at [mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com](mailto:mhennessey@miltoncanadianchampion.com).

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