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A THIRSTY FINISH: Five-year-old Kelly Johnston enjoys a cool drink beside her bike after finishing the three-to-five-year-old race of Saturday's Kids of Steel triathlon. Held inside and out of the Milton Leisure Centre, the annual event attracted approximately 300 competitors. For more photos, see page A21.

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Town stands firm on plant assessment

Remains only municipality calling for 'bump-up'

By Stephanie Hounsell
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

After a lengthy and spirited discussion, Town councillors have decided to continue their request for a more thorough environmental assessment of TransCanada Energy's (TCE) power plant plans.

Milton remains the only municipality to be calling for a "bump-up" — an in-depth environmental study — of TCE's plans to build a power plant near the Milton-Halton Hills border.

In a recorded vote Monday night, councillors narrowly rejected staff's recommendation to withdraw the request.

"All we're asking for is an independent

assessment," said Ward 1 councillor Rick Day, saying the Town of Milton is now "a lone wolf" in the matter.

The Region of Halton recently decided to withdraw its bump-up request once outstanding concerns regarding noise from the facility have been addressed, as did the Town of Halton Hills.

Mel Iovio, the Town's director of planning and development, said staff recommended following the Region of Halton's actions.

"(TCE) is considered to be a clean operating plant," Iovio told council, explaining the Region's health department has found the plant will meet or exceed provincial and federal emissions standards.

What makes the situation particularly diffi-

cult is the complexity of the matter, Day said, explaining council doesn't know the questions to ask, never mind the answers.

"It's way over our heads," he said.

What's needed is someone to independently advise the Town on what needs to be asked of TCE and ultimately whether the plant is safe, he said.

On hand to answer questions from town council was Chris Breen of TCE and Dr. Don Gorber, speaking on the company's behalf.

"I can sympathize with the councillor's comment about how difficult some of this is to understand," Breen said.

He emphasized the consultants hired by the Region have "a reputation to uphold" and can therefore be trusted with their opinion that the plant's safe.

But councillors seemed to feel too many

• see **STRONGER** on page A16


Inside

Today's Champion

OPINION	A6
CLASSIFIED	A26
REAL ESTATE	B9
DATELINE	B16

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