

Power generating station construction underway

By Cynthia Gamble
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

Curious passersby in the Steeles Avenue and Sixth Line area who are spotting huge vertical steel beams projecting out the ground are seeing the beginnings of Halton Hills' first power generating station.

TransCanada Energy (TCE) is building a 683-megawatt natural gas-fired power plant at the corner of Steeles Avenue and Sixth Line South near the Milton border.

According to TCE, the Halton Hills Generating Station (HHGS) will use state-of-the-art low emissions technology and have the capacity to generate enough power for approximately 600,000 homes. TCE is targeting the summer of 2010 for its completion.

Halton Hills council cleared the way to allow building permits to be issued for the generating station at a special council meeting in November.

There will be a phased approach to construction with the main building construction first, followed by the stormwater management facility, which will handle not only stormwater from the HHGS property but other industrial development in the corridor, and then the landscaping.

Appeal dismissed in tree-cutting

Charges against a Burlington man who plowed down thousands of trees in an environmentally-sensitive area on Fourth Line will stand.

Slapped with one of the harshest penalties for a case of its kind, George Vastis had his appeal of the September 2006 sentence — which included a \$33,000 fine and re-planting order that'll cost roughly \$122,000 — dismissed in Ontario Provincial Offences Court in Burlington Wednesday morning.

"The findings of guilt on the 11 'Environmentally Sensitive Area' charges will stand, as will the sentence on Mr. Vastis and the corporate defendant," stated Justice Alan Cooper in a written judgement regarding the 2003 tree cutting of 23 acres of woodlands on Vastis' Milton property near the Oakville border.

Defence lawyer David Crocker had appealed both the guilty decision and sentence, arguing that — among other things — the Crown's failure of disclosure of information and an unreasonable delay were in breach of his client's rights.

He also took exception to the severity of the tree-planting order.

None of Justice of the Peace Jerry Woloschuk's original decisions were overturned by Justice Cooper.

According to Janice Badgley of TCE, site alteration occurred between October and December, followed by:

- Phase 2 (December to April): mobilization, site preparation and piling. Piling is the placement of vertical steel beams into the ground, and will serve as the foundations for the generating equipment and associated structures. The driving of the piles could take up to five months and local residents have been warned that they may notice increased levels of noise and vibration.

- Phase 3 (February to October): underground installations

- Phase 4 (April to February 2010): above ground installations

- Phase 5 (August 2009 to May 2010): testing/commissioning and final completion.

Badgley said a community liaison committee has been set

up to act as a liaison between the community and HHGS. It will bring community concerns to the attention of HHGS and take information about HHGS back to the community. The committee membership is made up of representatives from the following sectors: business/industry; community/environment; residents; government and HHGS. There are representatives from the Hornby Area Rate Payers, POWER (Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources), Halton Hills TEAC (Town Environmental Advisory Group), Town of Milton, Town of Halton Hills, Halton Region and Conservation Halton.

"We are still in the process of filling vacancies for representatives in the business/industry and residents sectors," said Badgley.

For details contact Badgley at (905) 832-7333, 1-800-827-5094 or e-mail janice_badgley@transcanada.com.

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