

Council joins chorus opposing landfills near escarpment

By ROB KELLY

Milton councillors have added their voices to a chorus of communities opposing landfill sites on or near the Niagara Escarpment. Monday night council's general committee supported a Halton Hills citizens' group which is attempting to amend the Niagara Escarpment plan to keep garbage out of the abandoned quarries dotting the rock

face. The citizens' group, POWER (Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources), is fighting hard to fend off a proposal by a Milton company to open just such a landfill near Acton.

POWER contends RSI (Reclamation Systems Incorporated), of Milton, runs the risk of contaminating the giant Amabel aquifer, a major

underground source of water for much of Halton region, if their dump plan is approved by the province.

So far municipal governments from Caledon, Dundas and the townships of Derby and Sydenham have taken the same line as POWER. Milton has lined up on that side now, and firmly shut the door on sanctioning any such dumping activity, despite a suggestion from

councillor Brad Clements that his colleagues modify their stance.

Mr. Clements said household waste, including liquids which might leak into the watercourses, should not be thrown into quarry craters. But "dry" waste, such as construction rubble, could possibly be dumped into the holes, he felt.

"I would suggest we don't get into categorization," councillor Brian

Penman said, adding it "opens the door" for those wishing to fill in the craters with potentially questionable materials.

Councillor Bill Johnson was also quick to oppose Mr. Clements' suggestion. Such inert construction materials could instead be used for road beds, Mr. Johnson said. As well, there is still some question as to what is an inert material, he added.

Ontario Hydro is "desperately searching for ways" to get rid of ashes from power plant burning, Mr. Johnson noted. While "some consider" those ashes inert, there is still suspicion they contain toxic heavy metals, he said.

Town planner Bob Zsadyani said current quarry rehabilitation standards imposed by the province are "wide open," and that he too is aware of a case in which a "very large" Toronto-based corporation hoped to fill quarries with ashes.

Mr. Johnson said quarrying companies consistently attempt to alter initial rehabilitation plans, which often depict natural settings, so the craters can instead be filled with garbage. He indicated that Mr. Clements' suggestion would just encourage them.

"Let's not make it any worse. Let's make sure it does not get any worse."

Councillor Clements' amendment was defeated. The resolution in favor of no landfilling on the escarpment goes to full council for formal approval Monday.

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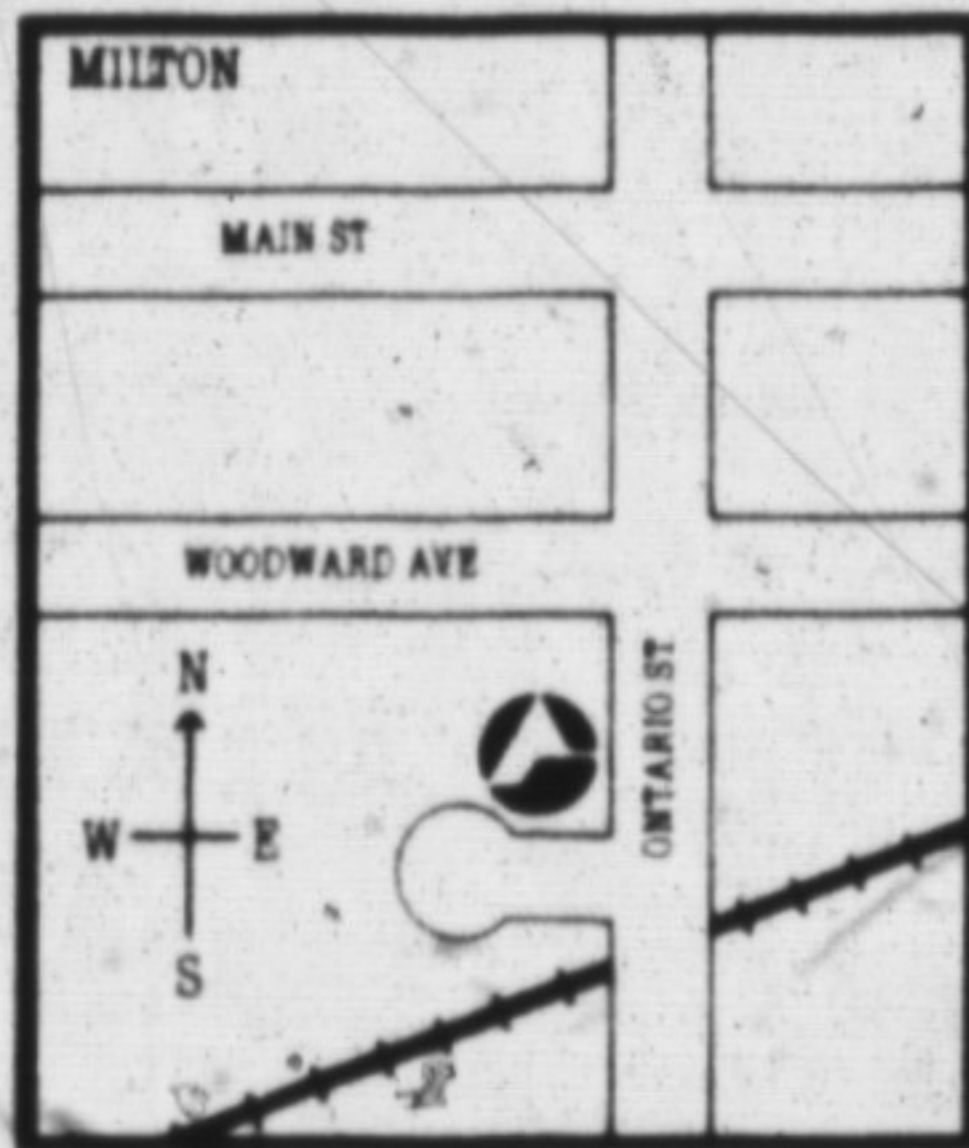
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Premier to speak at fund-raiser

Ontario Premier David Peterson will be the guest speaker at the annual provincial Liberal fundraiser for Halton's four ridings June 6 in Oakville. The fundraiser is billed as the "Premier Event" and will take place at the Briarwood Inn, Halton Centre MPP Barbara Sullivan's riding association is organizing the evening.

Ticket information can be obtained from Sandi Ferrec at the Ontario Liberal Party. The telephone numbers are: 961-3800 or 1-800-268-7250.

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