

## Fees to be 'reasonable'

from POMEROY on page 1  
Catharines didn't ask us for compensation," he reasoned.

If they hadn't shown understanding for Halton's plight, he said the Region — already paying through its teeth for garbage disposal — would have been in "major trouble."

He also pointed out that the considerable expense of approving the regional dump — the latest price has risen to more than \$36 million from an initial \$12-15 million — was borne and should therefore be shared by all of Halton.

He reacted strongly to two other issues that arose at a Monday Milton council meeting and were reported in Wednesday's *Champion*:

- That Milton plans to recall legal counsel to see whether it can use the courts to stop Halton from expanding its dump to accept the additional 250,000 tonnes of garbage.

- That Milton council was stung by the Region's refusal to appoint a Milton councillor to SWISC.

On the first issue, Mr. Pomeroy said the Region feels the additional volume promised to SWISC can be accommodated without expanding the dump by simply compacting the garbage further.

But he stressed that it's not Halton's decision to make. "We don't just go out and do it."

What Halton is doing, he said, is simply making a request to the Ministry of Environment to have the original approval agreement for the landfill amended, and "that's not illegal."

If Milton wants to hire a lawyer to ensure everything is above board, he said "that's entirely within their area of responsibility."

As for the second point, he said he

was "surprised" that it had become an issue. In June regional council selected its SWISC representatives and he doesn't recall it generating any sort of heated debate.

Halton's representatives to SWISC in the past, he said, had been the regional chairman and Burlington councillor Pat McLaughlin, as chairman of council's planning and public works committee (also responsible for waste management).

Council, he maintained, simply kept with tradition this year when it selected the new chairman of planning and public works committee (Halton Hills councillor Marilyn Serjeantson), and himself as Regional Chairman.

But there was one twist this year, he added. Halton decided to select a third councillor to fill in if one of the two couldn't make it. Councillor McLaughlin, therefore, was kept on the committee.

"They can take my place if they want," he added, tongue in cheek. "It's not a major issue."

Although Halton can set any price it wants for use of its landfill, the Regional Chairman doesn't think Halton should take its fellow landfill-starved Greater Toronto Area municipalities to the cleaners.

He said he'd like to see a "responsible" agreement worked out that would enable Halton to help fund the enormous cost it will take to meet stringent provincial recycling guidelines that will come into effect over the next decade.

"We're not in the business of retailing landfill," he said. "We're looking to help out our neighbours for a short period of time."

## Toronto councillor says garbage plan could collapse without Halton

By NORMAN NELSON

Metro Toronto councillor Paul Christie is worried that if Halton doesn't fully participate in the Solid Waste Interim Steering Committee (SWISC), the Province may reconsider its decision to allow member municipalities to open emergency dumps.

SWISC, an umbrella group of Greater Toronto Area (GTA) municipalities (Halton, Peel, Durham, York and Metro Toronto) is trying to devise an overall waste management strategy for the Toronto area's roughly 3.5 million residents.

Halton chairman Peter Pomeroy, however, contends Halton shouldn't have to contribute to the landfill portion of SWISC when it has already paid through its teeth — more than \$36 million, according to the last estimate — to approve its own site in Milton.

### Landfill-starved

As part of the agreement, Halton offered 250,000 tonnes of its dump, scheduled to open in 1992, to be used by other landfill-starved GTA municipalities.

Halton is the first SWISC centre to put forward its terms of participation, and the proposal, hammered out by regional council after much emotional debate at various meetings this year, is slated to be discussed by SWISC at a meeting today.

Halton's rationale for participating in SWISC is that it's interested in working with the other municipalities in the area of recycling.

For instance, through SWISC, Halton hopes that a planned composting demonstration project will be eligible for increased provincial funding.

### Critical lack of space

None of the other GTA municipalities, however, are anywhere near the stage Halton is in locating a dump, and their focus is more on the GTA's critical lack of landfill space, predicted to run out in 1992.

Mr. Christie, in an interview with *The Champion*, said what holds SWISC together — the carrot that the

Province held out to spur its formation — was allowing the member municipalities to locate contingency landfills that wouldn't have to go through as much environmental red tape.

Instead of having to go through the Environmental Assessment Act (EAA), as did the Milton dump, contingency landfills would only have to go through the less rigorous Environmental Protection Act (EPA).

He feels that if Halton agrees only to limited participation, the Province may withdraw this carrot.

And if that happens, and Metro Toronto is subsequently left without an interim landfill, he warned that it may soon become Halton's problem.

"The Ministry of the Environment might order Metro Toronto's waste into the Halton landfill, much like other municipalities have been ordered into our Keele Valley site," he said.

A second concern, he said, is other municipalities might follow suit, leaving everybody back at square one to look for their own waste disposal solutions.

He also noted the GTA hopes to resolve waste disposal needs for the next three or four decades, and he wondered whether, in 20 years, "Halton will want to come back in when their landfill is full."

### Not up to scratch

The Toronto councillor dismissed concerns, raised on many occasions by both Halton politicians and concerned residents, that Metro Toronto is not up to scratch when it comes to recycling.

While conceding that Metro has been "slow off the block", he said it's bound by the same strict provincial recycling guidelines as Halton.

Finally he stressed that a lot of people commute to Toronto for work, but those "individuals don't take their waste back with them."

The contingency landfill space put forward by each SWISC municipality is designed to supply the GTA through 1996, when the long-term waste disposal plan is expected to be in place.

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