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Peel pipeline for Milton to be closely studied

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

The millstone which has hindered growth in Milton, a lack of water, may soon drop from around the town's neck.

"I finally see some daylight here," said Milton Councillor Barry Lee, after a joint meeting of Halton Region's planning and administration committees last week. Mr. Lee was pleased with an expression of interest from Peel Region to negotiate a connection to Halton's water system. According to Halton's commissioner of planning and public works Art Leitch, Peel has extra capacity in its water treatment plants which it would like to put to use. Mr. Leitch said he could envision at least a short-term connection from Peel to service Halton's Highway 401 corridor.

The quest for additional water in north Halton has been a 10-year project, according to Milton Mayor Gord Krantz. However, that decade long

quest, part of the Halton Urban Structure Plan, is not without its critics.

Burlington Mayor Walter Mulkeiwich spoke at length against moving the water servicing plan to the next stage. Despite his efforts, committee members passed a motion to investigate the Peel water connection before the end of August.

They also shortlisted three consortiums to prepare detailed project proposals. The companies will be able to work with the option of water from Peel Region if a deal is struck. If no deal is forthcoming, the three companies will simply proceed with their proposals for pumping water north in a pipeline from Lake Ontario.

Regional Chair Joyce Savoline said a deadline will be determined in conjunction with the three consortiums in September.

"I particularly liked the cross-boundary proposal," said Mr. Lee. "It's clearly an item for serious discussion." He added that taking services across artificial political boundaries has been one of the thrusts of municipal reform.

Those in opposition to the plan hammered away at associated risks to the public purse if too much infrastructure is built, and not enough housing or commerce comes to Halton to pay for it.

"Without increases in the commercial and industrial tax base the property taxes of Halton residents will go through the roof," warned Burlington Councillor Ralph Scholtens.

Oakville Councillor Kevin Flynn agreed, saying he wanted the process to continue so council would realize the monetary risk that will be hung on taxpayers. He called the contention that risk will be shared with private developers "hokey" and said he would not take a chance with taxpayers' money.

Mr. Mulkeiwich called into question the uncertain financial impact on current taxpayers, potentially high development charges, and an unproven economic benefit to the region.

"It is nice to hear that the mayor of Burlington has the future of the region to protect. At one

point he wanted to pull it apart," said an angry Mr. Krantz. Mr. Krantz was equally aggressive with other opponents of the plan.

He asked Tom Muir, a representative of the Halton Planning Oversight Group which opposes many HUSP provisions, if he wanted a community in Halton to stagnate.

Mr. Muir said he did not wish to see stagnation. He estimated that southern Halton will take 20-30 years to build out. Regional estimates, based on slightly different criteria, indicate that will occur by as early as 2005.

Harry Olivier of Canadian Clean Water Systems, one of the three shortlisted consortiums, said after the meeting the process was one of risk management.

"Some risks are easily taken by the public sector and others are easily by the private sector," said Mr. Olivier. "It all comes down to risks and who can best handle them. To be fearful of risks, that's wrong."

• see PEEL on page 10

Deidre due home soon

• from DEIDRE on page 1

dent's digestion of food.

However, the ailment is common in children who have had bone marrow transplants, Mr. Scholtz said, and "nobody's panicking."

If the problem is resolved and no other complications occur, Deidre could be home this weekend.

"I would say at this stage we're on the road to recovery," Mr. Scholtz added.

Deidre is currently in partial isolation to prevent infection. Her movements in the hospital and contact with people are being carefully controlled, however, not as strictly as during the first few weeks after the transplant.

Mr. Scholtz and his wife Liz are busy preparing their home for Deidre's return. Because the risk of infection is still high, the house must be kept sanitized as thoroughly as possible to eliminate fungus.

That means Deidre's bedroom walls must be washed twice a week and her contact with people limited. Special air filters are also being installed on the furnace.

Mr. Scholtz said family, friends and even strangers have been busy at his home stripping germ-carrying wallpaper and tearing up old carpet.

"People I don't even know were there. It will never be as clean as it's going to be over the next year," a chuckling Mr. Scholtz noted.

The couple, who have two other children Zac, 6, and one-year-old Desire, plan to hold a press conference to announce their daughter's homecoming, Mr. Scholtz said. Deidre may be able to attend.

"We had one when we had bad news and now we're going to have one when we have good news."

The pair will also take the opportunity to express their gratitude to the community, which banded together in support of the girl.

"We were very lucky people because we had a whole town behind us," Mr. Scholtz said.

Little kid camp

A summer camp for children aged two-and-a-half to five-year-olds is being offered by CHERISH Family Resource Centre in two sessions this summer.

The morning and afternoon sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays run from July 9 to 25 and July 30 to August 15.

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