

Same old song on HUSP

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

The music was picked out long ago but many councillors are reluctant to dance.

Every time a new step in the Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP) comes before regional decision makers some councillors balk. The opposition comes primarily from urban southern Halton because they feel they will be carrying the cost of future northern development.

Regional council purposefully set the Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP) on a path to allow every provision to be scrutinized as it comes up. However, this requires someone, usually Milton Mayor Gord Krantz to defend the plan.

At a recent meeting of Halton's administration and finance committee, when a request for \$90,000 to investigate the Peel option for water servicing came up, the familiar pattern occurred again.

Burlington Councillor Ralph Scholtens questioned if the \$90,000 would reduce the end cost of the HUSP project, through the reuse of such information.

Acting chief administrative officer Joe Rinaldo said the money was necessary for Peel to determine if they could go ahead with supplying water to Halton, and would likely have little impact on any future plan. He added, the determination of Peel's involvement should be known by early February at the latest.

"All along I've supported that the development should come at little or no cost to the current property tax base," said Mayor Krantz. "Development is going to take place. If you don't believe that you're in

la-la land. It's time to demonstrate some leadership. We've been dancing around these issues for 11 years."

Mr. Rinaldo told the committee there could be substantially more work to do prior to a final decision. The total bill could be as high as \$400,000. The current project brings money spent so far to \$140,000 for the Peel option.

"We are getting the supply costs before we have any idea of the cost to bring it to a useable place in Halton," said Burlington Councillor Jack Dennison. "We will know what's available but we don't know if it's cheaper."

Committee chair Rob MacIssac reminded councillors that the overall thrust of exploring the Peel option had already been approved by regional council. At the subsequent meeting of regional council the measure was passed.

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