

Dump appeal is costing taxpayers thousands

An appeal by Superior Sand, Gravel and Supplies Limited and Crawford Allied Industries to the Environmental Appeal Board is costing thousands of dollars and there's no guarantee the hearings will resolve anything.

The original application by the two companies to build a 560-acre garbage dump in Maple, with a maximum life of 30 years, was squelched by the Environmental Assessment Board.

In the appeal, the proposal is for a 245-acre dump which will eventually contain 25 million tons of refuse for a period of 12 years.

If the appeal board determines the appeal represents a whole new application, it's back to the assessment board to start the game over again.

Consultants for the current hearing, which has had 10 days of sittings, are paid roughly \$400 per day. Legal fees amount to \$3,000 and it costs taxpayers at least \$4,000 per day for three appeal board members and a secretary.

Last Tuesday's sitting at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Maple did not allow for any public participation.

One man tried to interject his comments about a design specification of the dump and was told the hearing was strictly for presentation of evidence by the companies making the appeal. He subsequently left with his wife.

Vaughan Councillor Lorna Jackson, who was

at the hearing, later said she hoped the town would insist on at least one more sitting in Maple which will allow public participation.

"Some of the women asked me if it were possible to arrange an evening meeting so their husbands might get a chance to attend and respond to some of the proposals," she said.

All of last week's hearing was taken up by Vernon Dixon, hydrologist who presented evidence in the form of a design concept for the proposed landfill site. He was asked questions by both the board and the lawyer representing Superior and Crawford.

He went through numerous schematic explanations of the dump's proposed water recycling system, purge wells and emergency wells and a four-foot liner made of compacted clay, which would encompass the whole site.

A local ratepayer group, MAD (Maple Against Dumping) neighbors, and the Canadian Environmental Law Association are against the proposal even in its modified form.

Lawyer for the association, Ann Lancaster is still waiting for the appeal to rule, if a new application.

If that is the case, another proposal by the companies would force yet another Environmental Assessment hearing, which could take a year to determine if Maple gets a 12-year supply of Toronto and area garbage.

Corcoran says no conflict owning land near Estates

Richmond Hill councillor Bill Corcoran owns about 40 acres on the same block as the proposed Spring Mills Estates subdivision.

But it is a big block, one and a quarter miles square. Councillor Corcoran's property is more than 2,000 feet from the proposed subdivision.

"It would be nice if it joined on but there are seven or eight properties in between," he said Monday. "That development doesn't affect my property one way or the other. I have absolutely no conflict."

The proposed development was endorsed in a 5-4 vote of Richmond Hill council last February, encouraging lawyers for Spring Mills Estates to apply to the Ontario Municipal Board for a rehearing of their case. The project had been opposed by the previous council.

Councillor Corcoran has consistently supported the development proposal. But Mayor David Schiller says that if he was in Councillor Corcoran's position, he would have declared a conflict of interest and abstained from voting.

"It is not up to me to tell him," Mayor Schiller continued. "The

(Municipal Conflict of Interest) Act puts the onus on each councillor to make his own decision."

The mayor had some criticism for the act, too, for being vague. "I sympathize with councillors. They don't know whether to declare a conflict or not."

The mayor sits on a committee of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario which is reviewing the conflict of interest legislation.

It has just been considering the suggestion that a statutory requirement be introduced that a conflict of interest be declared if there is a development within a certain distance from a councillor's own property.

The problem is that there are some bylaws that have a widespread effect such as one approving a shopping mall, and there are others that only matter to the next-door neighbor.

Mayor Schiller felt that the approval of Spring Mills would make it more likely that similar developments would be approved in the same area.

The act provides that a councillor can be challenged in the courts for not declaring a

conflict. "The whole thrust of the legislation is that a resident bring the action," said the mayor.

Even if a judge finds a conflict, there are a number of sound defences that the councillor can fall back on. He cannot be unseated if the lack of a declaration is found to be "inadvertent", which Mayor Schiller says is an "incredible law".

The councillor can also claim that his interest is the same as the general interest of the municipality or that the omission was on a matter too trivial to concern himself about, the mayor said.

Ann Gold, who was defeated by Councillor Corcoran in the last two elections, thinks the approval of Spring Mills would increase the "opportunity to develop other land" in the Gormley area. But she said she would not take Councillor Corcoran to court. "You have to be awfully sure you are going to win."

Councillor Corcoran practically challenged those who were questioning his judgment to take him to court.

"If I'm wrong, I'm wrong," he said. "But if I am right, those who are saying these things can bear the consequences."



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A. We don't! The weigh-in is private.

Q. I was about to join Weight Watchers, when I heard that now you're making people exercise. How come? (signed) DISAPPOINTED.

A. We don't make members do anything! PEPSTER™ the Personal Exercise Plan, is optional. (Some people think it's great fun!)

Q. I'd like to join Weight Watchers' but the thought of cooking a meal for my family and a special meal for me every night is too much. What should I do? (signed) BUSHED MOM.

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WEIGHT WATCHERS The Authority

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MILLIKEN
Ebenezer United Church
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Mon. 7:30 p.m.

AURORA
Aurora United Church
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Thurs. 7:30 p.m.

THORNHILL
Christ the King Lutheran Church
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Wed. 7:30 p.m.

NEWMARKET
Community Centre
221 Cedar Street
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Thurs. 9:30 a.m.

THORNHILL
Saint Paschall Baylton Church
92 Steeles Ave. W.
Mon. 7:30 p.m.
Tues. 9:30 a.m.

KING CITY
King City Community Centre
Doctor's Lane, King City
Mon. 7:30 p.m.

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