

Local politics played role, judge said

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hydrogeological study, a growth management study or an environmental assessment of water servicing — all of which were required for the plan to connect King City to the York-Durham sewer system and increase the hamlet's population from 5,000 to 12,000 in 2021.

Campbell also stated he found it possible that the board concentrated too much on local political issues, rather than applying a regional planning analysis to the plan.

Opponents of the plan, happy with the court's decision, were expected to file their appeal this week. The case may be heard in the divisional court later this year.

"You can't leave King City in the state it's in. Otherwise, we'll be into another Walkerton."

"It's very nice to be heard," said Gillian Watt, secretary of one of the four groups, Concerned Citizens of King Township. "It is just the beginning."

Black, adding she's confident no errors of law will be found when the case is heard, said Campbell's ruling does not halt the sewer pipe or other development plans for King City.

If the plan's opponents are successful, the matter would be sent back to the OMB, she said. "Here we are playing legal games when we're trying to protect the health and safety of our area," said

King, who has long maintained the trunk sewer connection is necessary because septic tanks in the hamlet are leaking, endangering health.

"You can't leave King City in the state it's in. Otherwise, we'll be into another Walkerton," she said.

"Now they're without a plan and without sewers. If that's the kind of community they want to live in, I'll be very surprised."

Although the opponents — Concerned Citizens, King City Preserve the Village, Nobleton Alert Residents Association and Save The Oak Ridges Moraine coalition — believe the ruling stops planned development until the

case is heard, Black said the township is waiting for its lawyers' opinion on whether the pipe extension, still in the design phase, can go ahead in the meantime.

Campbell did not grant leave to re-examine Emo's decision to approve the sewer hookup.

Township Councillor Jane Underhill, who opposes the plan, argued it cannot. "The plan is based on the pipe. The two are inextricably linked," she said yesterday.

Watt said it would be "foolhardy" for King to proceed now with the pipe. "You can't justify the pipe unless you have (approval for) the 10,000 people."

Suzuki to speak at King benefit

Dr. David Suzuki, scientist and broadcaster, is coming to King to help opponents of a development plan for King City.

Suzuki, who has a keen interest in protecting the Oak Ridges Moraine, will speak next month at a \$100-a-ticket benefit for Concerned Citizens of King Township, the group says.

"For my generation, he is an environmental rock star," said Gillian Watt, secretary of Concerned Citizens.

An organization of 175 local families, the group is one of four fighting a township plan to expand King City. It is still \$20,000 in debt to its lawyer after an eight-week Ontario Municipal Board hearing earlier this year, Watt said.

But when Concerned Citizens con-

tacted Suzuki in Vancouver, he agreed to appear in King for free, she said. "We were surprised and delighted that he answered right away."

Suzuki once featured the moraine, a geological formation that runs through King, on an episode of his television series, The Nature of Things.

His speech, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Sept. 20 at The Manor at Carrying Place Golf and Country Club, is titled, The Ecological Millennium: Setting the Bottom Line.

Watt said more than half of the approximately 400 tickets have been sold. Information is available at (905) 833-4614.

—Mike Adler

Pig sewage source of Vaughan methane

BY DARYL-LYNN CARLSON
Staff Writer

A putrid pit of pig sewage that prevailed on a now-defunct farm has been pegged as the source of methane gas oozing from parts of Vaughans Melville Park.

The discovery of the former pig waste pit brings city officials one step closer to containing the seeping methane gas and ensuring the safety of residents nearby, said Vaughan Regional Councillor Michael Di Biase.

It is also prompting councillors and city officials to request testing of soil at other residential and recreational sites that once accommodated livestock farms or dung dumps.

Soil beneath a portion of Melville Park contains methane gas that is measurably elevating as the manure degrades over time.

Initially it was believed that toxic soil was mysteriously imported on to the Melville Park site when it was being developed in 1997.

"The source of the gas has been traced to the location of the pig manure pit," Di Biase confirmed. "At the time (of development), the topsoil was great. But nobody realized that, perhaps, there'd be a problem down the road."

The levels present are still safe, Di Biase noted. As a precaution, firefighters and city officials tested for methane between July 29 and Aug. 10 inside 15 homes neighbouring Melville Park. No gas was found, although the complete results of the tests won't be released until next week's Vaughan council meeting, said Di Biase.

The city is considering digging a trench around the former pig manure pit to contain the gas and stop seepage into the residential area.

Located near Paramount Canada's Wonderland, Melville Park includes two playgrounds, a pavilion, tennis courts, sidewalks, seating and lights.

Officials are suggesting other locations around Melville Park once included within the sprawling Shur Gam Farm livestock operation be tested for methane.

City officials will continue periodic testing of any and all sites found to contain traces of methane gas.



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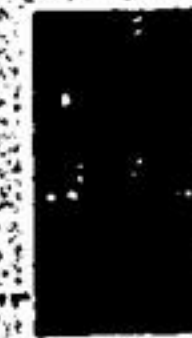
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