

Date: Saturday, February 26, 2005

Present: Municipality: Reeve Eleanor Harrison
Deputy-Reeve Tom Gardner
Councillor Kerry Lock
Councillor Jim Hicks
Councillor Diane Griffin
Administrator/Clerk, Gerald Bain

SGS Lakefield Research Limited (SGS):

Heather Watson, Senior Environmental Planner
Marnie Dawson, Environmental Technologist

Minute Taker: Marnie Dawson

Re: Public Information Meeting, February 26, 2005

Township of Algonquin Highlands

Municipal Class Environmental Assessment

To consider alternatives for handling hauled sewage.

SGS Lakefield Research Reference No. 10279-005

Purpose of Meeting

This meeting was intended as an opportunity for the public to review and discuss the alternatives for handling hauled septage.

Meeting Minutes

The meeting commenced at 10:00am at The Stanhope Firefighters Community Hall.

Reeve Harrison (RH) welcomed everyone, introduced Members of Council for the Township of Algonquin Highlands (TAH) and Representatives of SGS Lakefield Research Limited (SGS).

Heather Watson (HW) welcomed everyone and provided some background to the current project. She proceeded with a brief PowerPoint presentation including a description of the Class Environmental Assessments and the Schedule C Class EA Process. The applicable work to date, the work plan and proposed schedule were laid out. HW also described the evaluation of the alternatives, and design options.

Reeve Harrison (RH) opened the meeting for questions.

Ron Bobbie (RB) asked what the estimated Gross Annual Tax Revenue was? RH replied 3.5 million.

A gentleman from Kushog Lake asked how many lagoons and wetlands are used in the province for septage treatment and are they polluting. HW indicated that she was unsure of the exact number of lagoons and wetlands that were being used in the province but that they were all being monitored as per the Ministry of the Environment (MOE).

Stan Dutka (SD) inquired if a large-scale municipal plant for the whole area had been considered. HW and RH indicated that Haliburton and Minden already have their own treatment plants. They also indicated that large-scale treatment plants are expensive and are not one hundred percent fool proof. RH also stated that a treatment plant at the county level was not an option.

A question from the gallery asked, in the questionnaire it poses the question which treatment system alternative would a person support, however in order to make that decision the cost differences between the treatment systems would like to be known. HW explained that the costs of the treatment systems were considered and weighed as part of our matrix to determine the preferred design alternative. The constructed wetland is the most expensive, then the advanced treatment systems and the least expensive was the lagoon system. More detailed information regarding cost can be provided by request.

A gentleman asked how the treatment system would be monitored. HW indicated that the treatment system would have to be monitored but how has not yet been discussed. The treatment systems can be monitored by either an automated system or manually. It will also depend on the MOE requirements.

A question from the floor asked about expansion and what is the existing life expectancy of the treatment systems that are currently being looked at. HW replied that representative from Waterloo Biofilter indicated the life expectancy is about 20 years. HW also point out that all of the advanced treatment options are easily expandable.

Mr. Buntten asked about the odour of the lagoons in periods of high winds. HW replied that yes, at certain times of the year when there are high winds there would be an odour caused by the lagoon treatment system.

Sandy Mackay (SM) stated that there is a 1% hidden growth factor that is comprised of seasonal residences, which are now starting to stay year round, and indicated that this number should be considered. SM was also inquired if the estimated hauled sewage was still 8 million litres per year. HW replied that the calculations were reviewed and it is now estimated to be 36,500 L/day, which is approximately 8,000 imperial gallons per year.

SM asked if it was possible to use the Frost Centre's treatment system, as the Frost Centre is closing down. HW indicated that the Frost Centre was considered, but was eliminated as one of the design options.



SM inquired about safety. That haulers will be trucking the material along the roads, and wanted to know if there will be emergency training of staff for spills. RH indicated at present there is no emergency plan in place for this particular event however, there are plans in place for spills and they will prepare an emergency plan for this particular case.

SM wondered if sludge was a factor with advanced treatment systems. HW indicated that this would not be a problem as settling takes place in a primary tank.

SM asked if pharmaceuticals would be treated, and if anyone has done a study on the levels of medication in the septage. HW stated that pharmaceuticals in septage are a province wide problem and not just for the TAH. HW also indicated that the best solution for this is prevention; don't flush medications down the drain.

SM indicated that the TAH has been working on this project for 4-5 years, knowing what the expenditure is going to be, how much does the TAH have in reserves for this project. Gerald Bain (GB) stated that over the past 4 years there has been a portion of the reverse has been designated to waste management. The value of this is approximately \$100,000.00. The total value of the reserves is 2 million.

Steve Bell (SB) as far as he is concerned with regard to the treatment approaches, he is worried about what is going to happen to the sludge and is the Waterloo Biofilter able to handle the job. HW indicated that representatives from Waterloo Biofilter assured us that the Waterloo Biofilter would be able to handle the septage. SB commented that we should talk to users of the system to see if it will work.

John Oliver (JO) asked why the TAH is looking to do this alone, he wants to know if there are other towns or municipalities that we have looked at to help us out. HW indicated that we looked at Fleming College in Lindsay; unfortunately they were not able to handle the loads that we require. RH stated that other townships are not willing to put the costs forward to help out. The TAH has land and treatment available to handle this locally. In addition the County is unwilling to take on waste management.

JO stated that the TAH waste management plan states that the dumps will be full in 2007. Why are we not looking for another site, a free standing site that can be developed. RH indicated that they are currently looking to expand one of their sites as part of their waste management plan and this won't affect that plan.

JO further inquired that if the TAH is expanding would the site chosen for expansion be a better site to handle the treatment of their hauled septage, and is the TAH looking at that site. RH indicated that the Township is currently looking at other sites for expansion of solid wastes but it will take some time before the Waste Management Strategy is complete. Therefore, it did not make sense to hold this process to wait for the waste management process.

JO commented that the TAH should wait a few more years until all things are considered and combine both plans onto one "super site".

A member of the gallery raised the point that that environmental spills and damage will happen and questioned whether the TAH looked had considered worst case scenarios. HW indicated that the robustness of the treatment systems was considered and that plans will be in place in the event of a spill.

A comment from the gallery was that you could look on the internet for tests conducted by the MOE of these treatment technologies.

Ron Johnson (RJ) from Maple Lake was wondering about the distances, noting that the Maple Lake site is only 100-150 meters from residents. He questioned whether that is a great enough distance and noted that there is not a lot of fill material over the bedrock is that alright. HW indicated that the distance was enough to meet the MOE's criteria. Marnie Dawson (MD) added that the treatment systems would be designed to accommodate the site. If there is not enough fill material more will be brought in, in order to design the system properly.

A person from the gallery inquired about the life expectancy for the Waterloo Biofilter. MD indicated that the life expectancy of the filter media was approximately 20 years.

Jenna Taylor (JT) asked whether there would be an alarm system for the treatment system, to ensure deliveries don't exceed capacities. HW indicated that there will be an alarm system, as per MOE requirements.

Bob Phillips (BP) asked how could the TAH control the composition of hauled sewage entering the treatment system and where it comes from. HW indicated that haulers would have to apply to use the facility and would have to take records of where they collected from; there will be a documentation trail. It will also be based on honesty, there maybe some instances that slip through the cracks.

Mark Dupuis (MD) asked if one of the more advanced treatment systems were installed, will odour travel and what will be the impact of contaminants in the ground, and how far will the odours travel. HW indicated that the advanced treatment system is designed to treat effluent to a good quality. HW continued to comment that open system have more odour associated with them then a closed system.

Norma Goodger (NG) inquired as to what other criteria will be looked at now that the preferred option has been identified. RH replied that they are unsure, they will have to go over information from this meeting and discuss options with SGS.

NG asked if this was their last opportunity to comment. HW stated that it was not. When the draft ESR report is completed, the public can request a copy and provide comment.



NG inquired if there was going to be another public meeting. HW replied that this was the final public meeting as per the EA process.

There was a general discussion in the gallery about this being their last chance to comment on the design of the treatment system.

A comment from the gallery was that lagoons should not be considered as one of the treatment options and that the site should be at Maple Lake.

A lady from the gallery commented that she lives in Newmarket by a sewage lagoon and there is a considerable odour at certain times. HW agreed with her statement.

David Allen (DA) inquired about the large-scale treatment option. He thought it was still an option and was wondering why it is no longer being considered, indicating that the cost is not that great, and inquiring if there were other capital expenditures that had to be considered. RH indicated that there are other capital expenditures that need to be considered besides sewage treatment, for example, solid waste management and roads. RH also indicated that a large-scale treatment plant needs to be located near water and therefore the Township would have to find a site that is located on the water. In addition tax rates across the Township had to be considered.

Chris Black (CB) indicated that from an environmental point of view the current options are better than a large-scale treatment plant because of the chemicals associated with a treatment plant.

As the last question, a gentleman from the gallery asked when can we expect a treatment system to be in place. RH indicated that ideally the TAH would like a treatment system in place by fall. However she has stated this before and it didn't work out, so it will go in as soon as feasibly possible.

At 12:30 p.m., RH announced that the public open house was adjourned. She invited the public to speak individually to TAH and SGS representatives.