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Treatment Plant

Subject: Mid-Halton Sewage

Last summer on two afternoons, people who live around Heritage Way smelled garbage in the air. It was just that we were not aware of a sewage treatment plant exists near by, and we were unable to connect the dots, hence make a complaint to the regional council.

On all the hearings, we were told to voice our concerns. Yet, most of the residents know nothing about sewage treatment, therefore, incapable of asking the right questions. Most of us could only voice our concerns at very high level through fears of noise, odour, toxic, traffic, overspill, and lack of money/budget to implement the best technology available at the plant. We recommend the council to commission outside experts to speak out on behalf of the residents and safeguard the local residents interests through out the entire planning process.

The engineers and staffs from the current plant have provided little to assure the residents of their capability to handle the future plant of eight-time larger of its current size. Question concerns what technology will be used or whether there is enough money to implement the best available technology at the plant were always deflected, or to be answered in the future, or referred to politicians. Their best effort was merely to offer the residents a tour of current plant. Being able to manage the plant at its current capacity is of no proof that the technology and expertise exist to manage a plant of eight times larger. We all can drive our family car around the town, but it does not mean we have the ability to drive a formula-one and go 200 mile per hour. A tour of current plant brings no comfort to the local residents about the planed expanded plant.

What technology to chose in the expansion plan should be addressed front and centre, before regional council give its approval to the expansion plan. How the chosen technology will addresses the concerns of the local residents, in terms of odour, toxic waste, noise, traffic and emergency procedure should be explicitly mapped out in the plan before the plan being sent to council for approval. Is there enough money/budget to implement the best technology that addresses all the concerns of the residents? If there is lack of money/budget to support the use of the best technology available in the world, then might be we should not consider the expansion at current time. Five years down the road, we could get a much better sewage treatment plant at half of today's price. The engineers themselves are at lost too if they are not clear of the budget that is available for them to do the job from the politicians, i.e. the regional council. Therefore, what technology to use might be more of a political issue than a technology issue!

What is the backup plan for the proposed expanded sewage plant. Under a disaster scenario at the plant, i.e. the plant has to be shut down for an extended time period, where will the flow be diverted? There seems no meaningful capacity increase planed for all of the other sewage plants in the region, therefore where will the extra capacity come to handle emergency closure of the expanded plant?

In conclusion, we believe that there is not enough research, planning, budgeting and public education done on the subject to enable the council to make an informed decision.

Sincerely Yours

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