

From: Susan Walmer
Sent: 20/06/2005 4:27:20 PM
To: Stevenson, Elma
CC: tjones@town.aurora.on.ca
BCC:
Subject: SUBMISSION TO REGIONAL COUNCIL THURSDAY JUNE 23 2005

Elma,

Since I am unable to attend as a delegation for the upcoming Regional Council meeting on June 23, 2005, please include the attached letter on the Regional Council agenda for Thursday June 23, 2005.

Thank you,

Susan Walmer

SUBMISSION TO REGIONAL COUNCIL THURSDAY JUNE 23 2005
REGARDING YDSS INCEPTOR SEWER PROJECT

MINUTES OF TRANSPORTATION AND WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 15, 2005

Please be informed that the Ratepayers of Aurora Yonge South passed a motion at our Board meeting on Tuesday June 14 to endorse the position of STORM that the Region of York is proceeding forward with the 19th Avenue route despite not being able to demonstrate that Section 41 of the ORMCP has been adequately addressed.

1. ORMCP requirements are not being met.

We are concerned that at two meetings with Regional staff in June 2005, a consulting firm, Enviroscope Consulting Services were asked to provide their input on the issue of compliance with the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. In fact, the comments from this consultant, Fred Johnson, who previously worked with the government and the public on drafting the ORMCP also recommends that *“ York Region modify its background material for the Master Plan Study to incorporate a detailed accounting of the requirements of the ORMCP and how they will be addressed in the planning, design and construction phases of the proposed interceptor system.”* The public is still awaiting the detailed material to address the requirements of the ORMCP.

2. Sewer overflow risk assessment and critical timing of project have not been demonstrated.

It was also recommended that *“In the event that the final recommended route for the interceptor system will cross lands identified in section 41 of the ORMCP, York Region provide a detailed accounting of why the Interceptor System is needed by the public. This should include a discussion as to how sewage reduction conservation measures were factored into the “needs” discussion.”* Even after attending several meetings, including the joint planning and transportation meeting on June 15, 2005, the risk assessment for sewage overflow and thus the urgency for this project is still not clear to the public. If timing is so critical to this project, where is the risk assessment for sewage overflow? Is the Region of York evaluating alternative mitigative initiatives that would be similar to the City of Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Study to address excessive storm water/sewage overflow issues into rivers and basements? We have not seen any background studies on the urgency of this issue, nor the reasoning behind the urgency for this pipe. York Region's Sewage and Servicing Master Plan done by their consultants does point to the 'capacity' issue that the Region faces given future urban growth to the north in Aurora and Newmarket but further investigation shows that Richmond Hill's sewage output far exceeds that of Aurora's and Newmarket's.

3. The peer review process is unsatisfactory.

Although the ISAC group and the Region agreed that the peer review process should be handled in parallel with the project, the peer review team has not yet submitted a report. Yet a decision has been made by Transportation and Works

prior to the Peer Review. Why bother with a Peer Review if it is not taken into consideration prior to decision-making? Perhaps the Region has already been assured of a favourable review due to the compliment of consultants involved with conflicts of interest between the Peer Review Team and the Consulting Engineer Group along the 19th Ave route. Either way the optics of this process is disturbing.

4. York Region Goal #8 in 20 Year Strategic Plan, which says “Engaged communities and a responsive region.” is not being met.

Chairman Bill Fisch has indicated on the website for the YDSS project that “ *York Region is innovative in their approach to providing meaningful public consultation with its residents and stakeholders. We call it “consultative engagement: because we want to undertake our infrastructure projects in a manner that engages residents from the early environmental and engineering studies through to the actual construction stage. My hope is that these innovations will contribute to the development of more positive feeling about how we do these projects and fewer unresolved complaints. When consultants do not adopt your advice, you will receive a detailed explanation.”* Unfortunately, there are still many issues that are unresolved between the resident groups, the consultants that were paid for by the Region on behalf of the residents, the consulting groups, and the Region staff. Until these differences between engineering approaches have been resolved, the Region has not fulfilled its commitment to a two-way communication with residents. It is still dictating the method and approach without considering public input.

5. RAYS will be joining other environmental groups such as STORM, Earthroots, and Richmond Hill Naturalists to request that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Minister of the Environment review this process and route selection.

Please consider these factors prior to the Region’s adoption of the recommendations from the Transportation and Works committee to proceed with the YDSS route on 19th Avenue.

Sincerely,

Susan Walmer
Chairperson, R.A.Y.S.
Ratepayers of Aurora Yonge South