

September 6, 1983

MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL,
TOWN OF OAKVILLE

RE: Region of Halton - 1983 Interim Waste Disposal Plan

Thank you for allowing me to address your Council.

It may be unusual for an elected member of Council in an adjoining municipality to address yourselves on a Regional issue. However, the issue is unusual. The issue is of paramount importance to the residents I represent - as well as to all the residents of the entire Region.

My task is to urge you to defer or refer the recommendation of your General Committee on this subject so that your committee and Council might evaluate further evidence and reconsider the full context of the garbage question in Halton in 1983.

The City of Burlington has adopted a position contrary to the one proposed by your committee. The City of Burlington has, by resolution, opposed any expansion of the existing Burlington site, and has recommended the adoption of a variant of the B.F.I. proposal for an initial period of 5 years. I would like to see the two sister municipalities which together create the greatest percentage of Halton garbage adopt a similar approach. Further, I would urge this Council to consider the rationale and the context for the City of Burlington position as it was expressed in the Burlington staff report, C.A.O. #55/83 (Revised), August 11, 1983. This report presents an approach to the Halton garbage question which has not been evident in much of the documentation on the subject. I am filing this report with your Clerk and urge you to study it.

The residents of West Burlington through the West Burlington Citizens Group and this group's Solid Waste Management Committee have expressed their opposition to further landfill in an already filled area. The immediate neighbours of this site have expressed concern and opposition. The views, experience, research, and expertise of these citizens is available to your Council.

I understand three arguments, at least, have been made to support the General Committee recommendation.

The first argument is that the proposed four phase expansion is the only viable solution considering the costs. The viability of this solution on environmental grounds, particularly for phases 3 and 4, is highly debatable and could become the subject of lengthy hearings and appeals. This argument does not recognize that for the first time in the history of the attempts to find permanent disposal facilities a non-landfill alternative is available. Whether this alternative is too costly depends on a number of criteria which must be set out first. It certainly depends on the context of the decision.

The second argument is that perhaps all four phases will not be required at any rate. This argument is highly speculative. Indeed, the history of previous interim solutions suggest that the argument cannot be sustained. In any event, it is irrelevant in considering whether any area should be subject to further landfill.

Thirdly, the suggestion has been made that Oakville has had its turn landfilling for Halton, a promise was made to Oakville residents in 1980, and that now the Region will live up to any commitment involving the existing Burlington landfill site. This argument forgets that Burlington too has done its share, and particularly the north Aldershot area. Also, the expansion of the present Burlington site where Oakville and all Halton garbage is now being buried, was part of the same 1980 Interim Plan and promise. (The residents in West Burlington felt they had a commitment in 1980 and would like the same support in 1983 which they see Oakville residents getting. (This Interim Plan was devised in 1977-78).)

I want to suggest the following points for you to consider in arriving at a decision:

1. The proposed interim expansion of the present Burlington site presents real local and environmental concerns particularly in respect to phases 3 and 4.
2. Regional policy as stated in the Regional Official Plan and in various Council resolutions, particularly the 1980 Solid Waste statement, has committed the Region, and therefore the municipalities, to minimize landfill and to move to the use of garbage as a resource. *
3. The recently published Ontario Government Blueprint for Waste Management in Ontario says that "it's now time to formulate new policies and controls" and clearly points to non-landfill alternatives of reclamation from garbage.
4. Do we learn from history? Previous attempts at interim solutions have only pushed the time for final reckoning further and have not worked. How long do we put Halton residents through the agony of temporizing and the cost of procrastination? In 1980 there was no readily available non-landfill alternative to plug into. In 1983 there is! This B.F.I. alternative has come to us asking for our garbage. I want to suggest that if we take history as a teacher we look at this alternative seriously. We turn our garbage into an energy resource now.
5. Is the B.F.I. proposal more costly:

On the surface and in the short run it appears that the answer is yes.

The real question is whether Halton residents are willing to look underneath the surface and at the long run to evaluate today's costs. I believe they are.

Let me quote the Ontario's Government Blueprint: "municipalities must develop true costs which include social, planning, approval, and realistic replacement value of disposal sites. Only when this is done will the costs of reduction, reuse, recycling, and recovery be cast in true perspective."

In other words, landfill is more expensive than we think it is, we are going to have to go non-landfill eventually, and an opportunity exists to-day. I believe that it is leadership to grasp an opportunity rather than reject it. In Burlington the additional cost per household for the B.F.I. proposal would be \$10-\$20 depending on the scenario and agreement. These figures are not based on a "full or true cost" calculation. These are small figures for large and long term gains.

Finally, it is time to come to grips with our garbage problem. Another interim or temporary solution will not allow us to do so. Nor will it allow us to keep down long term costs.

There is much more to be said. I am pleased to answer questions.

Respectfully, I ask you to reconsider your General Committee's recommendation.

Thank you.

W. Mulkewich

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WM/lf