

EX 84

TO: The Environmental Assessment Board

FROM: Mrs. Dorothy Pocock, Resident of West Burlington

DATE: May 29, 1984

SUBJECT: Public Hearing re proposed expansion of the Burlington Landfill Site

West Burlington encompasses the former village of Aldershot. It is a well established area and many residents have lived here for more than 30 years. It is a lovely district, however, over the years a number of dumps have been located here - for the past 20, 30, 40 years and possibly even longer. Specifically, in the area presently under consideration by this Board already have one site, closed in 1972, now a park, which is the source of much concern over the leachate coming from that site. We have the present site which already has had one expansion, in 1980, and is now faced with yet another - leachate from this site has, until recently, been denied by the Region. If this is not enough, in addition we are facing the prospect of yet another site adjacent which the owner, NSP, would like to operate as a private landfill site, as is more likely, as a regional site as this site is being considered as one of the 6 potential candidates under the environmental assessment currently being carried out in the Region - yet another 20 years.

This area not only should not receive any more garbage - it should never have been used for garbage in the first place because:

- 1) of its location just below the brow of the Niagara Escarpment,
- 2) of its location in the Parkway Belt West
- 3) its location on a steep slope of land which continues down to Burlington Bay,
- 4) because it is traversed by streams that flow through the neighbourhood to the Bay
- 5) because of its fractured shale base.

Contrary to many groups which have fought the issue of landfill sites, the residents have not jumped on that bandwagon called NIMBY - Not In My Backyard - we have received the garbage which has been generated by everyone in this area, plus the rest of Burlington for all these years and since January, 1983, all of Halton. We are a responsible community, on our own - with no backing from government, initiated a recycling program in the early 1970s - citizens used their own garages to collect the newspaper, glass and metal. Later the City provided space at their Public Works Department on Brant. Street. Many, like myself, have continued to take these materials to the depot over the years until the City became involved in a program a couple of years ago.

Our citizens group is like the community itself - low key - interested in ensuring that the quality of life is maintained. Issues have tended to be similar to those in neighbourhoods elsewhere - traffic, development. although a few years ago we actively lobbied City Hall to ensure that a swimming pool long promised to the area was, in fact, located here and not elsewhere as was being advocated.

When it became evident that the Region was intent on using the West Burlington site for all of its garbage and that the life of the site at that time had only eighteen months space left in it, our citizens group became extremely concerned. The Region appeared to be heading in only one direction - expansion. In the time since January 1983 - throughout all the meetings we have attended - both city and regional Solid Waste Management Committee and council meetings as well as public and private meetings, the Region has never deviated from its course - expansion. It is interesting to note that when the Region met with Oakville residents at the time their landfill site was being expanded,

the Region gave them a promise that there would be no further landfilling there. In 1980, at the time of the previous environmental hearing for this site, no such promise was given the adjacent residents - why? Were they already planning the next expansion?

In the eighteen months following the provincial decision that there must be an environmental assessment for a long term landfill site, everything seemed to come to a standstill while the Region waited to see if there was going to be funding for the process. All this time they knew that they were fast running out of landfill space. In March, 1983, the Region was warned by the Ministry of the Environment not to ask for an exemption from any hearings on the basis of urgency - the Region waited until November and then did just that. Residents of this area have just cause to feel that no matter what our concerns are, the Region has made up its mind - call it pre-ordained - and there will be an expansion.

There are other reasons why West Burlington feels that it is being put to the screws. We know that the Region went to court 13 times in an effort to set up a new landfill site near Milton. We know that Milton council and the citizens group there have pursued aggressively and continue to do so, arguing that West Burlington should be the recipients of yet another landfill site because they do not want one in their neighbourhood. It is no small coincidence that NSP has submitted an application to operate a landfill site here. Milton was successful in forcing the Region to go through an environmental assessment for the long term site, however, now that their area has been selected again as a candidate area, their council voted to spend \$250,000 to fight landfilling - it looks like we're in for it again!

When we first started our opposition over a year ago, at that time the press considered us . . . unreasonable and self-serving. Having followed our activities since then, it is interesting to note how that attitude has changed and recently when the City of Burlington withdrew its opposition to the Region's plans, an editorial took the City to task for leaving its citizens out on a limb - "The City has, in effect, agreed to stand back and let its citizens do the fighting that should, rightfully, fall to the political and administrative arm of Burlington, not the citizenry".¹

When the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Brandt, stated that he was prepared to waive the Region's application of the Environmental Assessment Act through a section ²⁹24 order, the Canadian Environmental Law Association wrote to the Chairman of the Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee. The request was to urge the Committee to review the Region's request on the basis of concern "that an EPA hearing will be of much more limited scope than an EAA hearing as it will not require detailed evaluation of alternative sites and methodologies.We believe that this is a matter of public concern and that the Region should not be exempted from requirements of the EAA in this matter".²

We believe this is still the case. We appreciate the Board's decision to provide other points of view besides those of the proponent, however, it does not make up for the EAA.

It should come as no surprise that the anxious to-be-fair attitude of West Burlington is changing to a more aggressive stance. We are no longer willing to allow others to pronounce that landfilling should be here and not in their backyard. We, the citizens of West Burlington are going to take every opportunity to say to all of you - No More Dumping In Aldershot!

¹ The Burlington Post, "Dumping residents will hurt their cause", May 2, 1984

² Canadian Environmental Law Association, letter to Chairman, Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee, February 1, 1984.