



Citizens Opposed to Paving the Escarpment

2211 Brant Street P.O. Post 20014, Burlington, ON L7P 0A4,
Burlington, ON, L7P 4W1

For Immediate Release

October 27, 2010

The Mid-Peninsula Highway targets Flamborough. Pasuta and COPE to Co-Host Community Meeting

HAMILTON.

Councillor Robert Pasuta and Susan McMaster of Citizens Opposed to Paving the Escarpment (COPE) want people to know that Flamborough, along with North Burlington, is targeted for a highway. Pasuta, councillor for Hamilton's Ward 14, wants to ensure his constituents are aware of what the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has in store for our rural community.

COPE, a community organization that was formed in opposition to the highway when first presented by the Harris government under the name of the Mid-Peninsula Highway, is uniquely positioned to provide the community with an overview on the progression of the highway. **In a joint effort to get the word out, a community meeting will be held. It is scheduled for November 3rd at the Rockton Fairgrounds, #812 Old Highway #8 in Flamborough from 7PM to 9PM.**

After years of study as the Mid-Peninsula Highway and then the Niagara GTA Corridor, the MTO has released their latest transportation report (draft). "The headlines on this issue have lead some of my constituents to believe that a highway is off the table. That's not the case and I want to ensure community members have the opportunity to hear all perspectives on this important issue," said Pasuta.

Along with a presentation by COPE, City of Hamilton representatives will be speaking. The Ministry of Transportation has also been invited to present their study results but have not confirmed their attendance.

The Niagara to GTA Corridor was originally a 130 km mega-project planned to run from the US border at Fort Erie to link up with the 407 toll-highway in Burlington. The pared down version includes expanded transit, widening of existing corridors and a new super-highway that would dissect Flamborough and the escarpment in North Burlington; changing the essence of the rural community forever.

In their report, the MTO has concluded that a highway from Niagara ending at the 403 in Ancaster is not needed to meet transportation demands. However, they maintain that a 4-lane, 37 km highway through Flamborough and North Burlington is needed.

Sue McMaster, COPE Co-Chair, expressed concern over that conclusion. "In the words of the MTO, the preference for a highway that would devastate our Flamborough community and pave over farmland is 'slight' compared to other options considered. If factors excluded from the study to date were included, I believe the Flamborough highway would be removed as an option. We're also talking about tearing a highway through the Greenbelt. The Greenbelt requires new infrastructure to be 'essential'. A 'slight' preference based on suspect data does not meet that criteria," said McMaster.

McMaster also expressed frustration over the considerations granted other areas in the study that were denied Flamborough and North Burlington such as alternate modes of transportation including rail. Also, "a new highway is the most expensive option and would cost an around \$6 billion – a prohibitive amount given government debt loads", she said.

www.stophighway.com

“The consideration in the report regarding air pollution impact to the area demonstrates the lack of regard for the families who actually live here. The report says the impact would be ‘slight’. Under further examination, COPE noted that a threshold has been set for pollution levels, and as one geographical area approaches this critical threshold, it is deemed to be more advantageous to hold pollution levels there, but allow them to increase in another area that hasn’t yet attained as high a level. Since Flamborough isn’t as polluted as other areas, the risk to this community is regarded as ‘slight’. Rather than curtail pollution for all, the approach is to pollute everywhere,” McMaster said.

“There’s been a lot of talk about protecting our farmland. You can’t pave and save at the same time. Part of the reasoning for this highway is for supposed economic benefits. The wording in the report leads me to believe they mean development. That would be on the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve and agricultural lands needed to feed us. The inability of the powers that be to acknowledge the value of rural land and natural areas of the Niagara Escarpment, and incorporate them into long term planning, is obvious and unforgivable” said McMaster.

--30--

Contacts: Robert Pasuta, Councillor Ward 14: (905) 546-4643
Susan McMaster, COPE Co-Chair (905) 746-5061

Web Site: Citizens Opposed to Paving the Escarpment, www.stophighway.com