



Public Liaison Committee Meeting #3 - Notes

PROJECT: Town of Erin: Urban Centre Wastewater
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (EA)

DATE: June 7, 2017

LOCATION: Town of Erin Municipal Office

TIME: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES:

PLC members	Organization
Allan Aills	Mayor
Valerie Bozanis	General public
Nathan Hyde	Chief Administrative Officer
Deanna McKay	General public
Jay Mowat	Environment and Sustainability Advisory Committee
Linda Rosier	General public
Lloyd Turbitt	Let's Get Hillsburgh Growing Committee
Maurizio Rogato	Solmar
Melodie Rose	Riverwalk trails committee
Nancy Shoemaker	Black, Shoemaker, Robinson and Donaldson Limited (Planner for Tavares Group)
Roy Val	General public
Project Team	
Christine Furlong	Triton Engineering
Joe Mullan	Ainley Group
Gary Scott	Ainley Group
Neil Hutchinson	Hutchinson Environmental Sciences
Deborah Sinclair	Hutchinson Environmental Sciences
Dave Hardy	Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited
Noah Brotman	Hardy Stevenson and Associates Limited



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MEETING PURPOSE: To review and discuss findings from the technical studies that have been completed to date and to provide a preview of the Public Information Centre in June.

MEETING AGENDA

1. **Welcome Remarks**

Remarks by Mayor Alls

2. **Chair's Remarks**

Welcome PLC members

Review Agenda

3. **Subsurface Disposal Alternative Technical Memo**

Discussion of Findings and Implications for the Project

4. **Hillsburgh Surface Water Disposal Alternative Technical Memo**

Discussion of Findings and Implications for the Project

5. **Preview of Public Information Centre**

6. **Next Steps**

7. **Adjournment**



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Welcome Remarks

The meeting started with a brief welcome from Mayor Allan Ails and an introduction from Dave Hardy (PLC Chair), providing a brief overview of the agenda for the third PLC meeting.

It was noted that there was quite a bit of detailed material to go through together, so the meeting would be broken up into three presentations, with Q&A and discussion time following each presentation. The first presentation was on the results of the study of the subsurface disposal alternative with a presentation by Gary Scott. The second topic focused on the investigation of a potential second treatment plant in Hillsburgh with a presentation by Joe Mullan. The third topic was a discussion about the upcoming Public Information Centre led by Dave Hardy.

Introductions

The Project Team and PLC members briefly introduced themselves, mentioning the organizations that they were there to represent. Nathan Hyde, the new CAO for the Town of Erin, was introduced to the PLC.

Presentation: Subsurface Disposal Alternative

Gary Scott presented the results of the investigation into a subsurface disposal alternative. The presentation started with a brief review of the background of the study, noting that it was the result of a request/suggestion made by PLC members. Following that request, Ainley Group met with members of Transition Erin to better understand their concerns. This resulted in taking a closer look at the Servicing and Settlement Master Plan (SSMP), from which Ainley determined that the possibility of subsurface disposal had not been adequately addressed in that study. The SSMP acknowledged the possibility but had left it as a recommendation for investigation in Phase 3. In order to be able to satisfactorily close out the Class EA, Ainley felt that it was important to investigate that alternative.

Once approved by Council, a study was undertaken to determine the viability of subsurface disposal. A technical memo was completed that looked at: government regulations on subsurface disposal; other locations in Ontario where comparable systems had been used; a calculation of the land area that would be required; a study of which areas in Erin could use subsurface disposal considering environmental constraints; a consideration of alternatives in Erin Village and Hillsburgh to consider viability; and, a general project of potential costs.

Gary then provide a few highlights of identified considerations that should be taken into account when considering the viability of subsurface disposal:

Government regulations

- Wastewater systems over 10m³/d falls under MOECC jurisdiction and would require environmental compliance approval.
- Subsurface system effluent treatment requirements could be almost equivalent to the requirements of a surface water system.



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- The systems being considered for Erin Village and Hillsburgh would need to meet this standard.
- The technical memo discusses and conceptually outlines the effluent requirements.
- It is noted that to fully define those effluent requirements there would need to be extensive hydrogeological and geological studies that could take years to do.
- The MOECC is generally getting stricter about requirements as they are increasingly of the opinion that the ground would be getting saturated with nitrates and phosphorus.
- Regulations on subsurface disposal could tighten in the future.

Other locations in Ontario

- Subsurface disposal is fairly common for rural subdivisions and facilities.
- Most subsurface systems are in situations where the developer/owner actually owns the land it is put on.
- In Erin, it would be imposing the system on private owners, which could cause a number of issues.
- An investigation was done into one specific system nearby that is already having issues leading to bed replacement. It was also noted that the cost per house of that system was around \$21,000.
- If Erin were to do this, it would be the biggest system in Ontario.

Examination of land area

- Size of disposal beds required were calculated using MOECC guidelines.
- A service area of 58 hectares would be required to serve Erin Village and Hillsburgh.
- Due to a history of failure of these disposal beds, MOECC has been asking for additional disposal bed capacity.
- Erin Village and Hillsburgh have variable and undulating topographies with a lot of surface water drainage. Since any subsurface discharge requires a setback from surface water, this creates some limitations on potential locations for disposal beds.
- MOECC considers a 300m buffer as reasonable, with indications that they may increase the required buffer area in the future.

At this point Gary shared and explained the map of potential areas in Erin Village and Hillsburgh that could allow for subsurface disposal. It was shown that the possible areas are somewhat limited and that there would be a number of challenges for siting any subsurface disposal systems.

A general review of cost estimates for the various subsurface alternatives were described.

Given the findings in the Subsurface Disposal Alternative Technical Memo, both the MOECC and CVC recommended that subsurface disposal not be investigated further.



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Subsurface Disposal Alternative Q&A and Discussion

Q: What is the equivalent number of households that would produce 80m³/d of waste?

That would be the equivalent of around 80 homes. An explanation was provided of the usual waste numbers for standard homes.

Q: So the operation at Centre 2000 could service 70 to 80 homes?

Yes, though the system there has been having problems and they have had to add additional disposal bed capacity. If that were to occur on a full town scale it would be very problematic.

Q: I am aware of a subsurface system in the town of Mono and MOECC has required them to have a water source next to the system in case anything goes wrong.

We looked into that system in the report and noted that they have been having issues.

The project team would like to clarify that MOECC did not require a water source to be located next to the system. Since there was nowhere for the system to discharge to surface water, discharging into the ground was the only alternative.

Presentation: Two Treatment Plant Alternative Technical Memo

Joe Mullan presented the results of the investigation into the possibility of a second treatment plant and an additional surface water discharge site in Hillsburgh. It was noted that this alternative was not heavily discussed in the SSMP and that Council felt it was best to complete all the due diligence and investigate this option.

The SSMP collected and evaluated water quality and flow data on the West Credit River from Hillsburgh to south of Erin Village. From this data a discharge location was identified with support from MOECC and CVC and the study was then closed. At the start of this project, Ainley reviewed the data collected in the SSMP and found that there was not enough data to complete an Assimilative Capacity Study for discharge in Hillsburgh in order to understand the flows.

In order to collect the data required to properly determine the 7Q20 for the Hillsburgh area of the river, flow and water quality data would be required for at least 10 years of monitoring in order to meet MOECC and CVC data standards. Undertaking this investigation would mean a significant delay for the implementation of a communal wastewater system and would cost around \$500,000. Most importantly, there would be no guarantees that the study would reach a positive result, meaning that 10 years of studies could be done and then the result could be that effluent discharge would not be allowed at that location.

High-level cost considerations comparing two plants versus one were then reviewed. Overall, the two-plant solution would end up costing more than a single treatment facility.

Due to the time, cost, and uncertainty of being able to implement a second treatment plant with MOECC and CVC approval, it is recommended to proceed with a one-plant solution.



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Subsurface Disposal Alternative Q&A and Discussion

Q: I would like to see the cost numbers in today's dollars. How can the \$60 million be the cost for just the one treatment plant?

That is the cost of the treatment plant for full buildout. It can be phased along the way to coincide with the actual population growth called for in the Official Plan.

Q: Is there somewhere where we have seen the number of properties that this effects?

We can express costs by the numbers per lot, but at this stage we usually look at it in terms of the number of people to be served by the system.

Q: People at the PIC are going to be asking about costs. How will that be addressed?

We will be making it clear that considering specific costs at this point is getting ahead of things in the process of the study. That is a topic for the next stage and we will assure everyone that we recognize that this is the topic of greatest concern for most residents and it will be covered in detail in the next PIC in November.

It will also be important to point out that the number of people for full buildout is being determined by Official Plan decisions. Those growth targets will have an impact on the associated costs for current residents.

Q: When we talk about two plants, are we talking about two surface plants? Did you consider the possibility of surface disposal in Erin Village with subsurface disposal in Hillsburgh?

Yes, we are talking about two surface plants. We did investigate the possibility of surface disposal in Erin Village with subsurface disposal in Hillsburgh and it was concluded that it would be a 12% increase in cost to do subsurface in Hillsburgh over piping into a single treatment plant in Erin Village.

Q: If you present these numbers at the PIC, shouldn't you include the costs of both the plant and the piping? This does not include the piping.

Good point. Collection system alternatives have not yet been evaluated and are going to be looked at in Phase 3 of the Class EA. For the next PIC, we should be able to present total costs including the plant and piping.

Q: There was some discussion of using the Cataract Trail as a possible avenue for connecting the sewage systems of the two villages. Has there been any further investigation into this?

There have been initial discussions with the CVC and they have indicated that they are open to considering this but nothing has proceeded on that topic yet.

Q: Are both of these reports on the Town's website?



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The subsurface study is currently up on the Project's website. The treatment plant alternative memo will be up shortly.

Comment: People had a strong reaction about the cost numbers at the PIC for the SSMP. I suggest that the messaging be very carefully thought through with how the costs are presented to people because that has potential to scuttle the whole project?

Great point. We are very much aware of that concern and will be thinking carefully about how everything is presented.

Q: Is there a way to talk about the potential for Provincial and Federal funding to perhaps soften the blow for people?

Mayor Alls responded that it would be premature to discuss that possibility, but that he has had some initial conversations and would be following up with Provincial and Federal governments.

Q: Operational costs are estimated over how long? And is that listed in 2016 dollars or does it take into account inflation over time?

Those operational costs are for fifty years and are in 2016 dollars without inflation.

Comment: We will definitely want the collection costs to be included in this.

The collection costs will be included when we get into that topic at the next PLC and PIC.

Public Information Centre Preview

Joe Mullan started with an overview of the PIC and how it will be set up. The date, time, and location were discussed, with PLC members sharing thoughts about how best to structure the meeting. The format of the PIC was described, starting with an informal opportunity to see the display boards and speak with the Project Team, a formal presentation, and then a question and answer period for visitors to ask questions and share their thoughts. A description of the display boards was provided including what technical material will be presented.

Feedback provided by PLC members is depicted below, along with responses from the Project Team:

Comment: This is a commuting town and 6pm might be a bit early to start.

We are flexible on the timing and can start the presentation later if needed.

Comment: Sixty display boards is a lot of content and I recommend that you lower that number to something more manageable.

We will look into reducing the number of boards where possible.

Comment: The arena might be the wrong space. We have never had 250 people show up for anything at the SSMP. There is a lot of echo and I would recommend doing it



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somewhere else.

Thank you for the comment. At this point we are committed to the location, but will have an audio system there that will reduce echo as much as possible.

Comment: Maybe some consideration should be given to a more open house format with less of a focus on a formal presentation. Presentations can get complex or boring. Q&A periods can become an opportunity for people to grandstand and maybe isn't needed.

Thank you for your comment. We will consider that possibility.

Comment: The Project Team should be easily identifiable.

A Project Team members will have name tags for easy identification.

Comment: If you were to use a projector for the boards instead of printing they could be much larger and more people would be able to see them at once.

We will be using a projector for the presentation, but for the boards that would mean that people could only see one slide at a time and might not focus on the topics that most concern them.

Comment: I think that you could get a lot of traction with people if you can show images of what the actual treatment plant would look like.

Comment: Lots of people won't be able to understand the language being used. You need to do as much as you can to make the language easily understood by everyone.

This is definitely a focus for us. It will need to be a careful balance between helping people understand through simple language and using technical accurate terms to avoid later confusion.

Comment: Who will chair the Q&A?

Dave Hardy will be the chair.

Comment: We have had bad experiences with outside facilitators. Tricky to have someone from outside the town to do this. You should consider having someone from the Town do it.

Comment: One of the major questions you will face is that the SSMP estimated river capacity at 6000 people and now you're saying it can be 14,500. There needs to be a simple and succinct answer to how this is possible.

Thank you for the comment. We will do our best to explain to people how our improved understanding of the flows and water quality of the river, as well as using best available treatment technology.

Comment: I didn't realize that there was an actual Phase 4 to this process. It would be good if one of the boards said what the next two phases are and what they will be dealing with.



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Need to be clear on that.

Comment: What's the presentation going to be? Is it simply going to be a reiteration of the boards? Some of the best presentation we've had have not had any words in the display. There's pictures to connect with what you're saying, but there's no need for words in the PowerPoint. The words are already on the display boards, there is no need for them in the presentation.

Comment: You've got to try to dumb it down. No disrespect to anyone, but they just want to come and easily understand, and you have maybe fifteen minutes before they lose interest.

Comment: I suggest that you keep the presentation to 30 minutes with a one hour Q&A period. At the SSMP the presentation went for over an hour and it annoyed everyone.

We will consider shifting time from the presentation to display board meeting and greet at the start of the event so that people can speak directly with the Project Team for more time.

Comment: The Q&A should be documented somehow.

We will be taking detailed notes and there will be a PIC consultation report produced.

Comment: If we advertise the meeting we might want to have it say why it's happening and what people will get out of the meeting.

The Mayor responded that this was a great idea and that he would write a piece for the newspapers to publish.

Final Comments

PLC members were asked to provide final comments on the overall process

- Strongly suggest to cut down the number of display boards.
- Council should look to senior levels of government for funding and to work with developers to make it affordable for the average person.
- This is very important and pertinent material and we want it to be received positively by the public. So pictures, and bullet points, and simple language will be important.
- The two reports discussed today were very helpful and answered a lot of our questions.
- I think that there is a lot of misinformation in the community about this. I don't think that the website and the information coming out of Council has told the story well. I think that people will have a lot of misconceptions and they're going to take small pieces of what you're presenting and they're going to run with it. Be ready to correct a lot of misconceptions.