

Last chance to dump Carlsbad dump

Residents reject environmental assessment over claims of shoddy science

Manotick News

By Emma Jackson



Dump this dump

Emma Jackson/Metroland

Cumberland Coun. Stephen Blais, middle, addresses resident Charles Preston's assertion that the city should reject Taggart Miller's dump proposal at the zoning level during a public meeting on Feb. 5. Blais said Taggart Miller would take the city to the Ontario Municipal Board – and win.

About 100 residents gathered at the Carlsbad Springs community centre on Feb. 5 for a final push against Taggart Miller's proposal to build a 172-hectare industrial and commercial waste management site on Boundary Road.

The Dump This Dump 2 campaign has been fighting Taggart Miller's proposal for more than two years, citing concerns about long-term environmental impacts, traffic volumes and smell. The public meeting – which Taggart Miller did not attend – is part of the group's ongoing campaign to inform residents about the developer's environmental assessment (EA) submitted this winter, and to continue a letter-writing campaign to provincial decision-makers to stop the project in its tracks.

Residents have until Feb. 20 to express their concerns about the EA, after which the province's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change will review public comment for five weeks. The public will get another five weeks in the spring to go over the ministry's early report before the final decision-making period commences in May. Environment Minister Glen Murray will have to accept or reject the EA by the end of July.

Dump This Dump 2 president Sue Langlois encouraged residents to send letters to their provincial representatives and project staff and to even drop into the ministry's regional office on Don Reid Drive off Walkley Road.

"Now is the time to stop them, not when it's going through the court or through arbitration," Langlois said.

So far supporters have sent about 400 letters, she said.

If the province approves the environmental assessment this summer, Taggart Miller would still have to file an Official Plan amendment with the city and then go through rezoning and site plan processes.

Edwards resident Charles Preston asked Cumberland Coun. Stephen Blais why the city can't just stop Taggart Miller at that point.

His answer was bleak.

"In all honesty, if the province says yes and the city says no, Taggart Miller will take it to the Ontario Municipal Board and most likely win," Blais told the crowd. "Is it worth going down that path and fighting? That's a conversation we don't ever want to have because we want the province to say no before we get there."

Langlois said her group has used the \$75,000 it has received from the city of Ottawa to hire scientists to identify flaws in Taggart Miller's report. Biologist Fred Schueler is investigating impacts on the fauna and flora that live in and around the boggy site, for example, and SENES environmental consultants will deal with air quality issues.

The group has also brought a hydro-geologist on board to consider water table impacts.

"He did a review of the draft environmental assessment earlier in the year and his comments say there are a lot of general assumptions that are based on no real data," Langlois said.

A similar project for the same site was rejected in the 1980s because, the group asserts, of concerns about impacts to the area's high water table and because of the "squishy soil" made up largely of unstable leda clay.

Taggart Miller, however, says on its website that the project was canned because of documentation and planning errors, not environmental concerns.

"Today the site remains – as it was in the 1980s – an excellent location for the (Capital Region Resource Recovery Centre) that can be designed and operated in compliance with all current Ministry of the Environment requirements," the website says.

Information about sending feedback can be found at dumpthisdump2.ca. Information from Taggart Miller's project is at crrc.ca.