

FLAMBORO SPRINGS A LEAK

If the Flamboro Springs water bottling company has their way, they will soon start draining the Flamborough Aquifer by an extra, 566 litres, per minute, 8 hours per day, 365 days a year. This will be the equivalent of 200 new homes in an area that has difficulty dealing with an additional 3 homes added to the current water supply.

This city relies upon well water and has a long history of summers that routinely deplete the water tower levels. Councillor Margaret McCarthy says the city has just spent a small fortune (\$1.5 million) in trying to figure out a way to double the water into the very tower that Flamboro Springs now threatens to drain.

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the well Flamboro Springs uses is on private property, but unfortunately the water underground affects the wells that the Aquifer is filled from.

Councillor McCarthy didn't even get a notice letter from Flamboro Springs. In fact she didn't find out about the actions the bottler was taking until an area resident contacted her with serious concerns.

When McCarthy contacted the Ministry of the Environment to ask about holding a public meeting, she was informed that it was incumbent upon the applicant to meet with area residents.

When she asked the applicant to hold public meetings, they not only declined, they told her that the company was not accountable to her.

Unfortunately McCarthy is accountable to the rest of the residents in Flamborough and wasn't about to let this attitude slip by. For the past four years each summer has put the residents in her community on a watering ban.

“How could you take this situation lightly?” She asks.

The answer is – you can’t.

What is needed is a full public consultation that addresses the issues and a clinical evaluation and not just taking the applicants word for it, that they can meet the demand – “without sucking everybody else dry.”

When she continued to press Flamboro Springs for public consultation, the reply she received was that “they would deal with the matter as they saw fit.”

It took continued pressure from McCarthy before the Ministry advised the company to do some kind of public consultation. According to the company a letter was presented in person to each resident, in a door to door survey. What the Ministry got back and what the Councillor was left with was a page of 48 addresses, some missing names, and a sparse line of comment.

The actual questions asked is anyone’s guess as far as the Councillor is concerned, she never did get a copy of the questionnaire. She wants to hear from the community herself, and she wants the community to realize just how much water they are talking about.

So, left with little time and no backing from the Ministry, she is holding her own public meeting at the Carlisle Community Centre, second floor, on Thursday February the 16th at 7 pm.

As Councillor McCarthy emphasizes, “you can’t replace water in an area that has historic water problems.”

Maggie Hughes

