

Traverse Express

11 April 2008

Another big step in lagoon clean-up

richard.mahoney@eap.on.ca
HAWKESBURY

Another step towards the clean-up of a former CIP waste lagoon in Hawkesbury is being taken by the Ontario government.

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is beginning to undertake an environmental assessment of the plan to clean up the 40-acre government-owned site situated beside the Ottawa River on the north side of Main Street. "We have to take this step before we can proceed with the actual clean-up," observes Mayor Jeanne Charlebois. Through this process, the remediation plan will be evaluated and public consultation sessions will be held and potential environmental impacts will be examined. A clear strategy for remediation of the land base will be developed from the EA process.

The town has opted for a \$19,680,000 plan to partially excavate the site which contains sludge left over from the former CIP mill which closed in 1980. Once the sludge has been dewatered and the site cover with a berm, the land would be turned over to the municipality.

Charlebois is still pressing the MNR to make a financial commitment towards the project. The ministry has said that is working with the town on potential uses and markets for the waste cellulose fibre as well as "additional partnership opportunities."

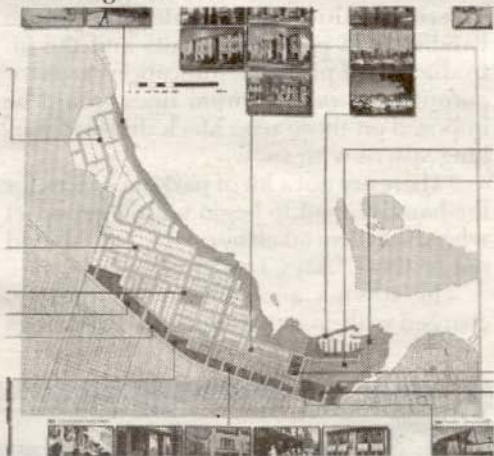
Natural Resources Minister Donna Cansfield will be invited to visit the property where the wastes, which often emit unpleasant smells during the summer, are considered to be a huge impediment to developing the large tracts of riverfront land. However, once the wastes have been removed, the waterfront property would have great potential, a study presented to

council in late 2007 concluded.

A development strategy calls for the establishment of housing and commercial ventures, such as a marina and a theatre, over the next 30 years on the waterfront. The plan is earmarked for the 40-acre government-owned wet lagoon at Main Street and McGill Streets, and the 254 acres of privately-owned land west of the former mill. These properties include dry lagoons, some of which are situated in Champlain Township.

The lagoon contains 312,700 cubic metres of sludge, including 215,300 cubic metres of compressed sludge, which is 79 per cent water and 97,400 cubic metres of "light" sludge, which is 92 per cent water.

The existing berm is not impermeable and some water from the wet lagoon discharges to adjacent water bodies, mostly Mill Creek, according to an April, 2006 report prepared by the consulting firm of Conestoga-Rovers.



A report outlines the benefits that could rise from the CIP lagoon.