

The County Plan

The GTA West Corridor plan advances and is now in Stage 2, which means that the general areas for a pair of new divided highways has been chosen.

The area is the rural part of Caledon Township. The Caledon and Peel Councils are opposed to any major highways through prime agricultural land. I understand that the Ontario government is adamant, though receptive to 'consultations.'

In April a professor of the University of Guelph spoke to a 'Food and Water First' meeting, the members of which aim to preserve agricultural land for agriculture rather than development, gravel pits, etc.

According to 'In The Hills' magazine, Professor Rene van Acker showed that no new workable land is available or can be produced by man, that human life is totally dependent on food and water and that, therefore, agricultural land is far too valuable to be wasted on housing developments, highways, gravel pits, etc.

Southern Ontario contains over half of the arable land in Canada.

I examined the 'Greenbelt' map and realized that those lands might have been chosen for future use as transportation corridors, for they surround the GTA and are comparatively cheap for government to acquire. The 'Greenbelt' designation does not prevent the Ontario government from driving highways through those lands, and we know that new highways always attract housing, commerce and industry; so I fear that Caledon will soon be paved in large measure. Where will our water and food come from then?

Deliberately planning population increases in rural parts of southern Ontario is madness.

New developments should be - should always have been - sited in wastelands, where no agriculture can flourish.

New growth should be forced north, above Lake Superior and the French River, or to other provinces.

A former deputy mayor of Orangeville once said, 'Orangeville must grow or die.' I submit that southern Ontario will die if farmland is wasted on growth.

Charles Hooker

East Garafraxa

Oil Sands and

Pipelines

Claire Hoy in his June 26 column makes a charge that had 'leaders such as Tom Mulcair and Justin Trudeau' and B.C. Premier Christy Clark 'been around in the 1870s, this country likely would never have been built' because they would have opposed the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway which he correctly states made for the creation of the country.

We wonder however, if even Mr. Hoy would have supported the railway project as it was conducted knowing it included the deaths of over 1,000 workers (averaging 4 per week); the willful starvation, displacement and destruction of aboriginal communities; importing 15,000 Chinese workers paid at less than 60% of white workers (the Temporary Foreign Worker program of the time?)

and; then imposing the infamous 'Head Tax' to be sure few stayed in Canada. Yes we would have done things differently with today's more enlightened leadership but that doesn't mean we would not have gotten the job done.

Bitumen (also called asphalt) as extracted from the Alberta oil sands has the viscosity at room temperature of refrigerated molasses.

It cannot be made to flow through a pipeline without being diluted with such as the natural gas condensate (pressurized to keep it in liquid form) proposed for the Northern Gateway Pipeline.

At the receiving end, the pressurized bitumen and condensate (referred to as 'DilBit') are separated with the condensate returned by a smaller, parallel pipeline back to the source to be reused. Bitumen sinks in salt water when battered by waves and mixed with sediments, according to a new study by the federal government, making it essentially unrecoverable. Concerns about spilled bitumen, diluted bitumen or natural gas condensate (a nasty acidic material) should not be dismissed out of hand. Pipelines and subsequent transport must be done right and not just by the cheapest means or the first proposal that comes along.

Mr. Hoy plays loose with the facts; in fact he willfully ignores them. While Thomas Mulcair and the NDP do out rightly oppose the project, Justin Trudeau in fact supports and has wholeheartedly promoted the development of the XL Keystone Pipeline in the United States. Trudeau's criticism on that project has been how Stephen Harper has tried futile bullying tactics on the US government and President Obama, foolishly declaring he 'would not accept no for an answer?'. Trudeau's position has been to listen to those that object, try to allay and address their fears and concerns, and bring them on board to move the project forward.

Trudeau has indeed objected to the route, but not the concept, of the proposed Northern Gateway Pipeline declaring if 'you're going to build a project that goes through one of the most vulnerable and beautiful ecosystems in the world in the Great Bear Rainforest and bring in congested tanker traffic...you have to have a better plan than what it looks like Enbridge is putting forward.' Trudeau has also stated that expanding the existing Kinder Morgan pipeline ending in Burnaby (already an oil terminal) may likely be a better option and should be studied further.

Justin Trudeau and the Liberal Party of Canada recognize that we have in large part a resource based economy and that we need to get our products to market. We also understand however, that we cannot put our ecosystem at unacceptable risk and that we need to be environmentally responsible in our resource development, its processing and transport.

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