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CANADA

Wastewater treatment plant on the menu at the Erin mayor's breakfast

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READ THE CONVERSATION

ERIN - As a small gathering outside the Erin legion protested at the Erin Mayor's Breakfast on Friday, those inside were hearing nothing but positives about the new wastewater treatment plant.

During his speech, mayor Allan Alls thanked his fellow elected officials, town staff as well as his wife. Most importantly, however, Alls emphasized the need for a wastewater treatment plant in order to support the forecasted population growth and development the town will be facing in the near future.

"I have many to thank but mainly my council who has helped me throughout my time as mayor. We have done many amazing projects for Erin such as the wastewater treatment plant in order to properly wean into the forecasted growth the province expects us to attain. We can't have a growing population, employment and development without the treatment plant."

The sold-out event, hosted by the town, was held at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 442, attracting about 100 local business people, agency representatives, elected officials and others.

Former Mississauga mayor Hazel McCallion was also in attendance and spoke at the even, trying to convince Alls to run for mayor again.

Meanwhile, Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott, who spoke as the guest speaker, talked about what it was like to represent the Wellington-Halton Hills residents at Queen's Park and the wastewater treatment plant.

"I can assure you there are very few ministers unaware of the needs of the Town of Erin and the necessity of the wastewater system that mayor Alls, local council and the town have diligently pursued for so long," said Arnott.

"Let me say this simply and directly, the Town of Erin needs a communal wastewater treatment system and I fully support the town's proposal to build it. The Government of Ontario needs to have a program that provides financial support for communities like Erin to offset the costs of hookups to the new system for existing residents and businesses."

Arnott further quoted Alls on how the provincial government needs to support smaller towns and townships with the necessary infrastructure and finances to make the forecasted growth possible.

After Arnott's speech, Alls announced that the Town of Erin has successfully attained a \$3.6 million funding grant from the Ministry of Infrastructure for the wastewater treatment system.

The grant will be used for pipelines that will connect existing properties within the urban boundary to the treatment plant as

well as local infrastructure such as road repairs.

Developers are paying for the costs associated with growth such as the costs of building the wastewater treatment plant and main trunk lines, as well as an additional \$7,000 per new single detached unit in Erin and \$10,000 per new single detached unit in Hillsburgh.

Rural residents will not be financially contributing to the construction of the project.

However, even with the reassurance that the treatment plant is a good thing for the town and the announcement of a funding grant, a couple of Erin residents as well as a Caledon resident still stood outside of the legion, holding up signs that says, “stop sewage plant” and “Save the West Credit River”.

“With all due respect with where we are, which is at the Erin legion branch, I’m standing outside here issuing my democratic right to say my disapproval of what is being planned,” said Ken Cowling, an Erin resident and advocate for the river.

“I am opposed to 7.2 million litres of sewage being proposed to go into the West Credit River at the boundary of Region of Peel and Wellington. It’s a water source for some downstream.”

Ann Seymour from the West Credit River Watch said the plan is flawed because the assimilative capacity study has some breaches in it – 7.2 million litres of effluent will be dumped into too small of a site which will raise the temperature and impact a nearby brook trout spawning location.

The pronunciation of Erin was also on the menu.

“Citizen of the year recipient, Doug Kirkwood, gave me a hard time because he says ‘the mayor must be a newcomer because he says Er-in when it’s really E-rin. So, I told him I’ve been here for 48 years and I came here to say Er-in to teach the locals not to say E-rin,” joked Alls.

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