

King gets attention with threat to close Caledon/King Town Line

By Mark Pavilons
and Bill Rea

King Township's tough stance, and threat to close the Caledon/King Town Line near Bolton, got the attention of the Town of Caledon.

King council, Oct. 17, voted to look into closing the Town Line, unless Caledon or Peel Region ponies up the needed funds for road repairs.

King Mayor Steve Pellegrini discussed the matter with Caledon Mayor Allan Thompson Friday, who was shocked that there was no formal agreement between the two municipalities over this stretch of road. King's move got their attention and now both King CAO Susan Plamondon and Caledon CAO Mike Galloway have begun talks.

"Our staff is going to be working with their staff to see what can be done," Thompson commented.

He added there was no acrimony at the meeting.

"I've always had a good working relationship with Steve," he remarked.

According to Andrzej Drzewiecki, King's director of engineering, public works and building, the strong recommendations were difficult, "but I don't think we have a choice."

There have been concerns for some time over the structural integrity of what's known as "culvert 210" on the Town Line, a few hundred metres north of King Road. There are insufficient funds available to replace the culvert, estimated to cost roughly \$2 million.

"Replacement of culvert 210 has been determined to be a priority considering the concerns about structural integrity of the culvert. This raises concerns about potential Township liability should the culvert's structural integrity be compromised," according to the staff report.

Therefore, staff are recommending the road be closed, between King and Mt. Pleasant Road, "until the funding for the replacement of culvert 210 is identified."

Drzewiecki added there are very few residences along that stretch that will be impacted. However, the road does see a lot of volume, which is considered to be commuter, through traffic.

He noted extensive public consultation, and ongoing talks with the Town of Caledon will take place before the road is closed, and detours spelled out.

Plamondon noted the "most prudent action is to signal our intent to close it," noting the Township can reopen the road at any time.

"Hopefully it gets Caledon's attention," she said at the council meeting.

At that meeting, Pellegrini was adamant about the closure.

"Either chip in, or this is the result," he said.

There have been suggestions that the road be "uploaded" to the regional governments, but so far neither York nor Peel has indicated any interest in taking over the road.

Pellegrini noted that when the road closes, drivers will find alternative routes, placing a burden on other arterial roads.

Thompson said about 9,000 cars use the road per day.

King Councillor David Boyd said given the amount of Peel-based traffic using the road, it's surprising that Caledon and/or Peel won't help pay for the upgrades.

Councillor Linda Pabst said she anticipates getting a lot of phone calls and complaints about the road closure. She added it should become a regional road, and pointed out that most municipal border roads are regional roads.