

Not much explained at Peel Paramedics meeting

Re: Peel paramedics meeting Saturday, Jan. 5, 2019

Like many concerned Caledon residents, I attended the meeting in response to recent multiple "Peel paramedics are not leaving Caledon" advertisements.

I expected this public meeting would be a seminar where Peel paramedics would explain how the previous health analytics plan for four permanent standalone ambulance stations and six reporting stations approved by Caledon and Peel council had become this new Peel satellite model without public consultation or council assent. I thought the paramedics would explain how the new model will work, and dispel public dismay over the loss of permanent ambulance stations across the rural northern portion of Caledon Township.

All present were astounded to find there would be no public meeting.

Just a quick-and-dirty booth comprised of two tables and a gurney, staffed by paramedic chief Peter Dundas and two assistants. Mr. Dundas appeared nonplussed to find himself faced by a barrage of questions that he answered in vague, nonspecific terms to those who could get close enough to hear over the background noise of a very disappointed public.

It became obvious that there was to be little or no explanation answering our questions, such as: How the previous plan for four permanent standalone ambulance stations and six reporting stations approved in 2007 by Peel regional council had become this new Peel satellite model without public consultation or formal Peel council assent.

Apparently, the term "standalone stations" had just morphed into "satellite stations" by the magic of some errant computer. We were not to worry, as Mr. Dundas believes in it - despite the faults and contradictions.

There was no answer to "How do you add about 80,000 kilometres to the annual mileage of each and every ambulance without an enormous increased in the cost of fuel and maintenance?"

The potential impact of the carbon tax and increased greenhouse gas carbon emissions from ambulances racing back and forth from Brampton had apparently never been considered.

We did manage to obtain vague assurance that at the start of each shift there will be an ambulance and paramedic team at both the Bolton and Caledon Village stations, but none at the empty station in Caledon East. And the paramedic teams assigned to these ambulances won't be local residents, but may be from Mississauga, etc., and not have the foggiest notion of the layout of rural Caledon north, relying entirely on a GPS to find patients.

We stupid members of the public are to blithely believe as Mr. Dundas does, or hopes, that his magical scheme will work. When we schmucks have an accident or heart attack, one of his pawns will appear, and - despite the odds - time will stand still so we don't croak on the way back to hospital.

My overall impression was that Dundas and the Peel council elite hold the opinions and fears of the public who fund their fiefdoms in complete and utter contempt.

Jack Hoke,

Caledon East