

Region's position a disgrace?

Regarding Region bypasses staff on Bolton expansion plans? (July 28)

Peel Regional council's vote in favour of Option 6 (Solmar Development lands) as the next location for Bolton's residential expansion is a disgrace.

What's even more disgraceful is that Caledon Councillor Annette Groves was the sole Caledon representative to support it. Of course, that should come as no surprise to residents, even those who only follow municipal matters at a very cursory level. The larger question, however, is why a majority of Mississauga and Brampton voted the way they did. One wonders if there hasn't been strong lobbying by Solmar. This decision overturns years of work by the Town of Caledon in assessing six possible growth scenarios for the Bolton area.

It ultimately chose Option 3, or the lands on the north side of King Street near Humber Station Road. This was predicated, in part, that these lands have been identified as the site of a GO Train station.

Apparently the Option 3 consortium has proposed front-ending municipal infrastructure services interest free. That proposal undercuts suggestions by some Regional councillors, especially the Mississauga ones, they're concerned about development servicing charges.

If allowed to move forward, the Option 3 lands would evolve into a community on par with Brampton's very successful Mount Pleasant district, a pedestrian/transit oriented 'mobility hub' community serviced by the GO Train, interconnecting bus services with bus layover stations and bike lanes.

Instead, Caledon will be saddled with even more sprawl as a result of the Region's decision. As has been noted by Mayor Allan Thompson in print and online columns, Option 6 (again Solmar) came last on a sustainability index as part of the extensive assessment of the six growth scenarios.

Although Peel Region has authority over local planning, its decisions can be overturned by the province. Caledon residents who are enraged by what has transpired at the Region might consider writing Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones, asking her to raise this issue before the Legislature when it resumes in the fall.

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