



Citizens Opposed to Paving the Escarpment

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NEWSLETTER – August 31, 2003

A major event took place late last week on the Mid-Peninsula highway. The Minister of Transportation, Frank Klees, met with representatives of Halton, Burlington, Hamilton and Niagara in an attempt to negotiate an agreement on how to proceed with the project. An agreement in principle was reached. A new and revised Terms of Reference for the environmental assessment of the project were discussed. This meeting was preceded by other meetings between City staff and MTO staff earlier in August.

COPE is currently in the process of gathering details on this agreement and will advise the membership via email and the website (stophighway.com) when we have more to report. COPE executives are scheduled to meet privately with Burlington's Mayor MacIsaac this Tuesday, Sept. 2, to go over the details of the tentative agreement, and we have been in close touch with the City and Halton Region throughout the process.

It is important to note that Burlington has not withdrawn its legal action as yet.

The City of Burlington has arranged two public information sessions for citizens to advise them of the results of the negotiations with the Province and MTO. They are scheduled for:

Wednesday September 3, 2003

Mainway Arena, Laurie Branch Auditorium (Main Floor)
4015 Mainway (corner of Mainway and Walker's Line)
8:00PM to 10:00PM

And

Thursday September 4, 2003

Council Chambers, Burlington City Hall
6:00PM to 8:00PM

We are not aware of any public information sessions being arranged by the Hamilton or Niagara municipal governments. If you reside in either of these areas you may wish to call your local politicians, voice your concern and enquire about how they intend to advise the public on the MPH negotiations.

In other news:

Environmentalist and author David Suzuki has come out strongly against the highway. See the COPE website for details.

The COPE website at www.stophighway.com is regularly updated - have a look if you haven't checked it out for a while.

COPE will shortly be releasing full details of our public opinion polling on people's views about the Escarpment, the highway, and other issues. A quick preview - 91.8% of the respondents felt it is important to protect the Escarpment, and 87.4% want a FULL environmental assessment before proceeding with the project.

There will be an Escarpment Celebration Day at Dundas Valley Conservation Area on September 21st hosted by the Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment (CONE) and the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

The program will begin at the Dundas Valley Trail Centre at 10:30 a.m. and run until 3:30 p.m. The program will include illustrated talks, a Carolinian Canada site plaque unveiling, a celebratory cake-cutting, hikes and family walks, story-telling and a door-prize draw. This event will highlight the natural, geological, recreational and educational values of the Niagara Escarpment.

Outside of the Trail Centre, there will be information tables. A COPE representative will be giving a short talk on the MPH and other highways threatening the Escarpment.

As always, thanks for your support and let's keep fighting!