

April 29, 2005

More MURF Activity and Other Comments

I was down at the MURF site yesterday watching the new drilling. This is all good news for Orillia that testing is continuing. Of course everytime new testing takes place the contamination numbers just keep going higher. As you may remember the last tests showed VOC levels 23,000 times higher than the MOE allowable level. So we will not be surprised if these new tests will show the same or worse results. I met a chap who was sitting watching this activity and went over to speak with him. You see I had met him last fall watching the soil excavation and spoke with him at that time. He told me then he had worked at Otaco as a manager for some 30 years. I had pressed him at that time to give me historical information and was most interested in getting him to verify the burial of drums. He with some hesitation denied that any thing of the sort had happened. But yesterday the man looked to be in an emotional and troubled state.

As I spoke to him he asked me what they (drillers) were looking for? I explained how the Feb. test result shot toxic levels off the scale again and that these were tests to determine how large the pool and how deep it goes. I also informed him that 50 plus buried barrels had been found and of course being me reminded him that he had denied their existence last fall. Well instead of being upset with me he began talking about how bad the property really was. He confirmed that indeed "Cribs" were a fact and employees did use floor drains to get rid of toxic materials. He stated that was the practice back then that management had devised the plan and it went on for years. He then spoke of other companies hauling their materials there to dump. What was really interesting is his concern of the lagoon. He was particular in telling me that this spot was really bad. I then informed him that no testing of this two acre area had been done because it was too soft to get equipment on he readily said "I'm not surprised it's soft., knowing what was poured into it". Remember folks this is the area mayor and council have designated for picnics and play.

I urged this chap to come forward and encourage fellow workers to do the same. I won't mention his name but I do know it. As I was encouraging him to **Speak Out** he told me something very interesting. It seems he had spoken to Wayne Gardy and had informed him sometime ago. He was non too pleased that the information he had relayed to Gardy did not seem to make any difference. You see folks eventually the truth does come out. First Tim Lauer denies that barrels exist and then denies having agreed to speak with his dad (former employee) and now Gardy has had information clearly indicating problems yet keeps right on voting to poison the population. How many other councillors have been approached by former workers only to be ignored???? I bet just about all of them. These people know, have known and are knowingly still pushing this site to the detriment of their community. Shame on you. On a lighter side I had explained to him how Mayor Pinocchio had made light of the drums found. I explain how three barrels were sealed and still full. Now two supposedly contained diesel fuel?? The third contained water. Well we had quite a laugh about the barrel of water. I mockingly chastised him for disposing of barrels of

water which he took with a smile. You see "Do Not" believe Mayor Pinocchio or the Puppets. They can not be trusted in anyway, shape or form. Just like Gardy has never come out publicly that former employees had given him vital historical information. But he did pooh pooh our historical info which has now been proven correct. I urge all former employees and owners to come forward now. No one will hold you responsible for the past. But as information comes out you will be held responsible for trying to cover up the past. It's bad enough that you have been adversley effected in health, so why allow other generations to suffer with you unnecessarily? **Speak Out!!!**

jim tolnai

April 27, 2005

Council Shows Their Colours

This week has been most interesting. People living in the area of Soldiers Memorial Hospital asked council for help with the parking problems on their streets. Council in it's wisdom??? decided to hold meetings instead of doing something about helping these taxpayers. Typical Orillia council reaction. Ralph Cipolla's quote hit the nail square on the head. "These people do not deserve noise and fumes in front of their house each morning. If it was an affluent area, we wouldn't tolerate it." Yup the cat is out of the bag. Affluent areas of town get treated better and with respect. The Peons who live on the wrong type of streets are given the run around. This type of disgusting behavior on the part of council has been going on and will go on until people **Speak Out**. So come on folks, tell council that their decision is not good enough and to **smarten** up. You have a problem that can be fixed real fast with a few signs. End of story. Don't tolerate this behavior by council. Your tax dollar is no different than those from affluent areas and your vote is of equal value.

Then We Have This

This council and city management have again shown their favouritism, stinginess and mean spirit in blazing colours. My friend Allan Millard is the President of the Foxfell Non Profit Housing Group. This group has taken \$400,000 of their own money and another \$100,000 of land and are building a 12 unit affordable rent complex. They will not see any return on their money nor profit. The group has received money from the federal and provincial government. The city has given a tax holiday for ten years and a postponement of development charges for 5 years at which time the whole amount (development charges) comes due and payable including 4% interest. For some reason these guys at city hall think this is some sort of gift??? Anyway the Foxfell group realized that they would be behind the eightball in the year this \$90,000 was due and all rent revenue would have to go to pay this deferred bill. So Allan asked council to waive the development charges or to amortize them so that it could be paid each year and added to their operating costs so it could be recovered in rents.

Half Million Dollar Bob Ripley claims in his report that under city bylaw, development charges **must** be paid, otherwise they come out of city coffers "in effect providing an outright grant" to the group. He further states "We aren't set up to be a bank and amortize payment." Me thinks there is more to this saga than

what Half Million Dollar Bob is saying. You see council gave a \$900,000 development charge gift to the purchasers of 95 Barrie Rd. after selling them the property for \$1. That's right Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars. But then this project is for profit isn't it??? Then what about the 12 acres of land sold to 2002 Ventures Inc. behind Walmart? This land was sold way below market value by council with a handwritten clause inserted which waves development charges on said property that is worth over \$1,000,000 dollars at today's rate. Of course this company is also for profit and the city seems able to give private for profit companies like this grants but not to a group who are not for profit trying to help the less fortunate. So if Half Million Bob is right that development fees **must** be charged there is some money to be collected by him from these deals. I suppose these two deals slipped by Half Million Dollar Bob, some what like the 1/2 million dollar error he made on the books. As I have said before and will say until we have one "**We need a Forensic audit in this town**" Double standard for affluent neighborhoods, double standard for profit vs. non-profit and all at our expense. The Ad Scam in Ottawa cost .33 cents per person. The loss of development fees on just these two deals alone for Orillians is \$66 per person. What about all the other questionable deals and contracts???? Me thinks there is a certain odor so let's clear the air.

jim tolnoi

April 26, 2005

TVO Re-Broadcast

Just got word that TVO will be re-broadcasting their MURF War Documentary tonight. If you missed it in January or just want to see it again then tune in to TVO at 8pm. Let your friends and family know as well.

jim tolnoi

April 24, 2005

Mayor Pinocchio's Nose Grows Again

Have you read Mayor Pinocchio's comments in the Saturday Packet regarding the unearthed barrels? The first comment by the mayor was "This is a brownfield site. There's no telling what your going to find". That's the point the Citizens Coalition has been making to this guy and the gang of nine only to be dismissed and told no testing was required. Their experts had everything under control and don't worry. So now he has the nerve to make statements like this. Then Mayor Pinocchio reiterates the city's commitment to making the site safe. What commitment?? These guys are still saying to build on this site without cleanup. Doesn't seem to matter how bad the news is they just damn the torpedo's. If they had a commitment to safety why did they dump "Hazardous Soil" at the landfill using illegal testing methods??? Some commitment???

Now here is my personal favorite. Pinocchio says "It's difficult to answer whether the scan for buried drums was prompted solely by concerns raised by the public. I suspect we would have done it anyway". What a load of bunk. The gang of nine were committed to only one thing. Build on this site and do as little testing as possible. That way when disaster struck they could argue "we didn't know". Of course along comes the Citizens Coalition who have wrecked their plans to build

a MURF on a toxic cesspool of chemicals. They are still claiming we are wanting to stop the building of the MURF which is a bold face lie. We are pro MURF and anti poisoning of the population. So folks don't believe a word of this tripe. The mayor and gang have only done what was forced upon them and no more. Thank goodness for committed people like the Citizens Coalition who have stood firm and have been proven right time and again. Mayor Pinocchio and the other puppets can not be trusted with this site. We must urge the provincial government to remove them from any responsibility.

Then there was the article in the Orillia Today where the mayor says that "abandoning the site has not been taken off the table". Sorry mayor but you or the province will not be allowed to abandon the site. Now that the plume is moving off site the property must be cleaned up. It is now too late to just walk away. Millions will have to be spent to first contain and then tens of millions to clean. But you Mr. Mayor and the gang must have nothing to do with it. I also urge the provincial authorities and the next city council to pursue personal liability of our present council and city management for the harm and costs they have inflicted on all of us. These people can not say they did not know . Nor can they hide behind Shaheen & Peaker as their contract specifically states they are only doing work the client asks for (see previous stories below). I also urge that a Forensic audit of the city be done immediately supervised by the Municipal Affairs Ministry. On a per capita basis our MURF scandal makes the Ottawa Ad Scandal look like child's play. We need the air cleared and bring municipal government to the people that is honest, caring and works in the interest of the taxpayer.

jim tolnai

[There is a great letter on the We Get Letters page sent to Premier McGuinty that you should read and then you too should write so we may secure this Toxic Site A.S.A.P.](#)

April 23, 2005

Buried Barrels Found

We have learned yesterday that the digging activity at the MURF site has uncovered 50 plus barrels. You may recall that the buried barrels were reported to the city and Shaheen & Peaker as well as the MOE by myself way back in October 2004. Our information was disregarded out of hand and there were those who implied we were lying. After much pressure and publicizing of our findings the MOE finally took our concerns seriously and had the city start the search. The net result is, barrels were found some with an oily type liquid still in them, Most barrels had emptied years ago and spilled into the ground. So for the Coalition this is a great first step but more needs to be done. You see we also shared information with these people about buried barrels of Cyanide and Arsenic. All anomalies found by the Geo study must be investigated. As well new drilling must be done in the area of the barrels to establish the extent of contamination. We believe there are more barrels to be found so the search must go on. Wouldn't it be great if former employees would come forward and let us know what they know. It would narrow down the search area and expedite the

cleanup which must take place.

As we have been saying for almost two years this site must be cleaned. This latest find proves what we have been saying is true. What still bothers me and other people is the insistence of mayor and council that they can still proceed via Risk Assessment. These people have absolutely no credibility left along with their so called Experts. The attempt to hide facts from the public along with their attempt to push the building of this site regardless of the harm to our community is unforgivable. Their denial of facts to have their way in my mind borders on the criminal. It is one thing to make a mistake but quite another to do it on purpose. I again call for the MOE to take control of this site immediately and relieve these people of any involvement. As long as mayor, council and city management is involved the community is not safe. Their single minded effort has caused dire consequences already. Now their effort to save face will cause even more. Just think back to last week what councillors and the mayor said about being able to manage the site. How on earth can these people manage now when they still won't admit the severity of contamination. If you look at the contents of 50 barrels, that is enough to contaminate millions of gallons of water and thousands of tons of soil. Of course no effort has been made so far to locate the infamous cribs that were used to dispose of toxins down the drain from the factory.

The mayor, council, city management and their Experts have done a tremendous dis-service to our community. By proceeding ahead with the soil removal and using illegal testing to claim the soil is non hazardous they have now multiplied the problem. The deeper wells that were done in February showed higher levels of trichlorethylene than at the shallower wells which were "Catastrophic" levels already. This new finding now leads me to believe that the aquifer may have been compromised. That makes this all the more serious. You our readers had better start taking this seriously because only public pressure will make the MOE act. So please write Dalton McGuinty and Leona Dombrowsky Minister of Environment and anyone else you think maybe of influence. Insist that you and your community be protected.

dmcguinty.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

ldombrowsky.mpp@liberal.ola.org

garfield_dunlop@ontla.ola.org

hhampton-qp@ndp.on.ca

jimtolnai

April 22, 2005

Packet Misleads Re: MURF

by: Allan Millard

I would like, through Speaking Out, to let any who also read the Orillia Packet & Times know that they are getting a real 'snow job' by the P&T when it comes to the MURF. There is no longer even a pretence of accuracy, let alone balance. I observe that with each new demonstration of the City's incompetence and/or with each new test result indicating that the City's so-called 'risk management' approach is doomed to failure, the P&T or the City will come up with a pro-City

editorial, paid propaganda, or letters to the editor.

A few days ago the P&T wrote an editorial backing the City on the MURF, but the editor had his basic facts wrong. He wrote about the worst contamination being on the western half (a former waste disposal site) of the West Street site and went on to support the idea of building the MURF on the eastern half where, presumably, the lesser risks could be managed. As anyone who follows the MURF saga knows, the known facts of contamination are the opposite. So far, the public information is that the worst contamination is in the 'footprint' of the proposed MURF, which is in the northeast quadrant of the site. False premise, false conclusion.

I called Monique Beech, reporter at the P&T, and asked her where, on the information available, the worst contamination was. She said that would be in the footprint. I suggested she inform her editor since he is unwilling to listen to me and evidently did not read Dr. Ford's paper which the P&T printed in January. The P&T published no correction, which leaves the impression that facts take second place to sucking up to the City.

Then again, perhaps the editor has some inside information about the true nature of the contamination on the western half. If it really is worse than in the footprint, we should all think about moving.

Just how bad is it in the footprint? Go to the Shaheen & Peaker Report dated March 21/05 on the City's website and see for yourself. (You will then be better informed than the editor of the P&T and every Member of City Council because they won't read it.) Look at Tables 3 (Summary of VOCs in soil) and 6 (Summary of VOCs in Groundwater). When levels 10 or 50 times allowed limits (MoE Table 1) are considered dangerous and can't be ignored, Orillia has levels that are thousands of times above Table 1. Trichloroethylene is the worst, so far. It is x22,656 in the groundwater and x3,750 in the soil. In tests in October/04 vinyl chloride, also known as vinyl chlorine monomer, was at x86,400, but the monitoring well where that was found was destroyed in the excavation for the footprint and no new MW was put down in February at or near that location. Dr. Ford's research has shown that the MURF site was close to setting world records for VOC contamination, based on the October results. Now that Dichloroethylene (3 forms), Ethylbenzene, Tetrachloroethylene, Trichloroethylene, and Xylenes are all up by 50% to 500% compared to October, we must surely now have the dubious distinction of owning the world record. And still the City plans to build in that footprint without any remediation. It is sheer lunacy. ,

Turning to another pro-City writer, the P&T published a letter from Pete Bowen, Chair, Recreation Advisory Committee. The caption was "MURF" based on needs not wants". Two things are very odd. One is that the letter appears just as the City, after a month's delay, released the damning new facts in the March 21 S&P Report. The second is that Bowen's facts are wrong. False premise, false conclusion. I think a very strong case can be made that 'wants' trumped "needs".

From the start of my concern with the MURF scandal ? and it really is - some 17 months ago I said I would not get into the question of what recreational facilities

Orillia needs. That is still my position. In taking issue with Bowen I am concerned only with his inaccuracies and distortions and not with whether Orillia needs this or that facility.

Bowen is correct that the City hired a consultant "to complete a needs assessment." It was a wise move. The consultant, dmA Planning and Management Services, did a thorough and professional job of assessing Orillia's current recreational inventory, population trends, demographics, current and potential activities, and needs to 2012 (i.e. immediate) and beyond to 2031 and a "build-out" population of 45,000. Bowen writes that the MURF committee struggled with needs and wants, and also that "if a suggested [MURF] component wasn't part of the needs assessment accepted by Council it wasn't included. All components were based on need." And he says that all indoor and outdoor components are based on need.

The consultants' final report, called a Feasibility Study (FS), is dated May 2002. (It specifically excludes engineering and environmental feasibility.) Let's compare the needs they identify with what Bowen and Council actually did.

1. FS at p. 10: Two additional ball diamonds will be required to the end of the planning period.

City: Build four, which meant the living swamp had to be sacrificed.

2 FS at p. 11: Two additional soccer fields are required in the short-term and up to two more will be required to the end of the planning period.

City: Build one.

FS at p. 11: Four tennis courts are required during the planning period.

City: Build 8.

FS at p. 11: The City of Orillia should not build a field house and indoor track to meet the current or future needs of Orillia residents.

City: Build both.

FS at p. 15: Indoor and outdoor facilities cannot be accommodated at the same site and so should be developed separately.

City: Put them on the same site.

FS at p. 18: In total, a MURF with a gross floor area of approximately 114,000 square feet is envisioned. (Should be "envisaged".) City: Increased that by 46%, i.e. to about 166,000 sq. ft.

FS at p.24: A preliminary capital cost estimate is between \$18 and \$19 million ? a reasonable estimate for a high quality MURF?. The total costs shown here are an accurate estimate of all project costs.

City: In July 2004 approved a capital cost of over \$29 million for the building and over \$43 million for the whole project. (Costs are now estimated at \$48 million but will be many millions higher if the MURF is ever built on the West Street site.) When the City added a skateboard park, an outdoor skating trail, space inside for a church, splash pool, water slide, more arena seating than recommended, an Olympic-sized ice surface, a bigger gymnasium, and on and on, how much of that could pass the "needs" test? With facts and figures the consultants set out the needs very persuasively only to have the City ignore every major recommendation. As it turned out, hiring the consultants was a waste of money. The politicians, and I include Bowen, knew that the fix was in.

Again, I make no comment on whether the consultants were right or the City is right. I say that Bowen and the P&T are 'conning' us about needs and wants. The larger lesson from the collusion of the City, the P&T, and stooges to sell us on an insane scheme to build recreational facilities on top of a toxic and volatile chemical soup is to remember that once their errors of fact and half-truths on some aspects are documented, their credibility on everything connected with the MURF is seriously undermined.

To end on a personal note, I calculated that the P&T gave Bowen about 600 words to spread a little misinformation and a lot of propaganda for the City. I like to think that I deal in facts and logic, but because I am a critic of the City and of the P&T on the MURF, I am told to keep it short (300 words or less) or forget it.

April 20, 2005

Mayor's Ducks Contaminated Big Time

Well! Well! Well! The tests from the monitoring wells drilled in Feb.. have now been made public by posting the reports on the city web-site. Of course there was no media announcement or press release in the hope that no one will actually find these results (does the Packet know about this new report???) . These guys have posted the results under "frequently asked questions??" in the hopes that people looking for an announcement on the "soil test results" would be fooled. Dishonest to the end trying even now to control vital information to us all.

If you remember, we reported new drilling on the MURF footprint area back in Feb.. Two monitoring wells were drilled and we have been demanding that test results be made public. Finally these results are now available. Back in Nov. new results from tests showed "Catastrophic" levels of trichlorethylene at 298,000 ppb (14,900 times higher). The MOE standard is 20ppb. Now if you think that number is bad (which it is) then hold onto your hat. As we predicted the site is far worse and **Exceeds** Love Canal numbers and other notorious sites world wide for this VOC by a huge margin. The new test on one of the wells is **453,120 ppb** (22,650 times higher than MOE standard). Can you believe this? Love Canal had trichlorethylene at 10,500 ppb. This latest investigation of our site jumped by over 155,000 ppb fourteen times more than what was at Love Canal. Our site has 43 times higher concentrations than Love Canal and the mayor is upset with comparing the MURF site to it saying it is irresponsible. What is irresponsible is the mayor not being honest with us and continuing to hide the truth. So folks go to the city web-site http://www.city.orillia.on.ca/residents/leisure_MURF.htm#faq . Scroll down to the **Q. What is happening with the investigation into the chemicals on the site?** At the bottom of this is a PDF logo. Open this and see the 58 page report. On page 28 you will see the test results for this well. We have stated all along that more investigation should have been done before work was started. We have said that there was a need for an independent consultant and we have said that this site contains "Catastrophic" levels of contaminants. This new finding undoubtedly makes our site the worst contaminated in the world . I'm sure mayor and council will give this a positive spin by saying Orillia is number one so don't worry we know what we are doing. Yeah! right.

In this same report Shaheen & Peaker now admits that water flow from the site is in a southeast direction. So it is very interesting to note that there is a large amount of pooling water in the southeast corner of the property. Even after the dry spell we have had the water is still pooled. Now we have said all along that the city placing 250,000 tons of fill to de-water will create problems. We feel this pooling is a direct result of the sponge effect on the site. The weight of this fill along with disturbing the site has squeezed the water and it is bubbling up from below. What is also disturbing is that to date we have not been told which direction the plume is moving off site. There is no doubt that the plume has left the property and yet the city is ignoring us and with holding this information.

Digging Up The Buried Barrels of Toxins April 19/05

*For people like Donald Archer who's letter to the editor in tonight's paper takes exception to People Against Everything in Orillia take some time and investigate what this project is all about. Even a ten year old can figure out that this site is and will poison our community for years to come. For Glenn Connor read the report. This site must be cleaned up and immediately. Of course we now have the digging up of barrels on the back half of the property and as yet no mention of what they plan to do to remediate the silica/asbestos of which there is over 600,000 lbs spread over wide areas. So for all Orillians who are for this site you better wake up and investigate the truth. You have been conned and lied to. You bought in under false pretenses and now is the time to hold the liars responsible. Orillia desperately needs a **Forensic Audit** and the MOE must place the responsibility for this site in other hands and order a cleanup **NOW**.*

jim tolnai

April 15, 2005

Still Piling it Higher & Deeper

In yesterday's Packet the comments of councillors on the MURF construction was like Swiss Cheese.(full of holes). The Packet editorial was full of inaccuracies even at this late date so we honestly don't expect much change in the near future. Secret meetings are still being held and public information is still being denied. Why just this week there was a confidential meeting between council and the MOE that the mayor won't discuss. Makes one wonder what is wrong with these people. Makes one wonder what is wrong with the MOE who have told city hall to have a policy of consultation and then attend a confidential meeting. What is so bad that can not be discussed openly??? Are we in imminent danger and to avoid panic by the masses we must be left ignorant so that we don't stampede the herd??? Mind boggling isn't it. So much for transparency.

Anyway it is amusing to see councillors now back peddling more interested in saving face than doing the right thing. Here is a bit of critique of their comments. Tim Lauer: Tim says he's still committed to the site working. Then he says he is committed to do it properly. So now he wants to do it properly. But hasn't he said from day one they were doing it properly??? Or did he know they were not doing things properly and now caught has had a change of heart??? But he also says he does not want to commit anymore money to the project until there is some

certainty. Hey! Tim to do this project properly get out your cheque book and set up a line of credit.

Doug Downey: Doug seems to be blaming the "New Brownfield" legislation introduced in October. Now I can assure everyone that the brownfield regulations have nothing to do with what is going on. Doug's hero Mike Harris and fellow Conservative neutered the MOE by removing their power of being Proactive to a mandate of being Reactive. What this means is that a developer now can go ahead and do just about anything they want and the MOE will do nothing to supervise or stop the process. But once the MOE finds out what has been going on they become active in laying charges and citing the perpetrators.

Unfortunately with this new way of doing business the harm is already done, not unlike pushing the Toxic Plume off the MURF site. Because of the public battle fought by the Citizens Coalition the MOE became involved much earlier and informed Doug and the gang just what penalties they faced if construction went ahead. Doug goes on to say they now have a handle on it, now between us (gang of 9), the ministry and the consultants. Sorry Doug but the ministry already had a handle on it and I am sure you and the consultants knew what you were doing was wrong but hoped to getaway with it. So far you have wasted close to \$8,000,000 and now you say you have a handle on it. Wow!!

Wayne Gardy: What can I say you voted him in?????

Ralph Cipolla: Ralph is still saying they are doing everything needed to make a safe place for people. But then why did the MOE say you are not???? Ralph also says he is angry and frustrated that 25 to 30 people are holding the project ransom. Seems Ralph lives on another planet and only comes here for council meetings. I have personally had a number of meetings with Ralph about what was going on. He always assured me and us that he and the consultants knew what they were doing and to have faith. Here is a guy in denial plain and simple. Ralph blames the Coalition as if it is us that is stopping the project. Hello! Ralph anybody in there??? You are responsible for fraudulent soil testing. You are responsible for lying, You are responsible for pushing the plume off site and you are responsible for the MOE findings. Get over it and get a life. You are "BUSTED" totally.

Carl Garland: Carl thinks it is a progressive step to develop brownfields. We agree. He doesn't think there are any obstacles they can not overcome. True again if you spend enough money so let's get on with it. But then he says "if the time comes that we can't proceed, I'm more than willing to look at other options. Well which is it??? Obviously they still don't know what they are doing.

Paul Spears: Paul confirms my statement above that they still don't know what they are doing. He says "I'm just going to wait and see. There's more information to come. I don't want to comment until I have all the information". Then why on earth have you consistently voted for this project Paul?? Why have you not taken the time to listen and ask questions??? You have already wasted \$8,000,000 and now you tell us you spent this money without having all the information??? I guess we gets what we vote for don't we????

George Morano: Not available. Smart move George to hide.

Francis Smith: No comment. Abrogating responsibility

The Packet Editorial:

Who writes this crap??? These guys claim that the worst pollution on site is the 17 acres under prohibition. Not true. The worst pollution (**Catastrophic**) known to date is right under the footprint of the building and they are still proposing to go ahead and build. Then they write that a "natural area laced with boardwalks might be equally useful as an enhancement to the MURF". Hello! your friends at cityhall destroyed the only natural healthy ecosystem on the property. Where were you then. According to you council has made some mistakes but the only one you site is lack of transparency. Obviously poisoning the community and our lakes don't count as a mistake by you? Nor was it a mistake to knowingly do bogus testing on soil samples etc. etc. etc. Shame on you.

jim tolnai

April 14, 2005

And The Farmer Took Another Load Away

Yesterdays' MURF story by Monique Beach was truly the biggest disappointment I have had in the Packet and Monique ever. Why these people don't get it I may never know but, I suspect what and how they report may have to do more with income than public interest. The story headline says "Liability at root of MURF risk assessment:MOE". Why is liability (money) more important than the safety of our children and community??? What is wrong with the staff at the Packet that they would not care about their community or the people in it? The picture Monique has tried to paint in her article is ridicules and wrong.

The article begins with Ralph Cipolla claiming the city is doing more than is required to safely develop the MURF. Now Monique of all people knows this is a complete lie yet does not challenge it in her article. So Monique here are the facts again. The mayor, council and city management started this whole process in secrecy. It took 22 months to pry the environmental study done by Molsons on the property from the clutches of city hall. Their intention was that what the people didn't know can't hurt the mayor , council or city management. Every scrap of information over the last two years had to be fought for by Speaking Out and the Coalition. The "more" Ralph is talking about is the minimum they think they can getaway with. Monique! Ralph is the guy who said in Nov. that new testing was good news while not releasing the "Catastrophic" test numbers for TCE's. Then they claim that these are actually "Hot Spots" and there is no plume. What does the Packet do??? Reports it as a good news story.

In Moniques story Ralph goes on to say "were doing whatever we have to do on a volunteer basis". What a load of garbage. Then he says "We could have just gone ahead and built a sports complex, but we're taking the present steps to make it safe". Now doesn't that just say it all??? Had we concerned citizens not opposed their plans for sure they would not have taken the present steps, which by the way is still a minimal effort.

Then Monique goes onto trying to justify Ralph's asinine assertions through John Steele from the MOE. Monique it has not escaped my attention that you did not use quotations for the first part of what John Steele said. If what you report is true then John Steele should be removed as a spokesperson for the Ministry or you

are misleading your readers. The system is not voluntary. There are penalties for not doing the right things. As in criminal law you can do the crime as long as you are willing to do the time if caught. So when the word "Voluntary" is used people are misled into thinking there is no penalty. Your story Monique misleads because you do not explain this very important fact. Just like in doing your tax return dishonestly nothing will happen to you unless you are audited. What we (Coalition) have done is demanded that audit be done by the MOE. The audit showed the city has not done what is required and now **"MUST"** do it regardless of what Boss Hog and the 9 Piggies say or suffer the consequences. These people have tried to cover up their attempted crime and have been caught. Now you support them in their defense by telling people they are voluntarily trying to make the project safe. Then you have the nerve to print how Ralph blames the "members of the Citizens Coalition" for the delay. Rubbish! and you know it. Shame on you and all involved in spewing this crap at the Packet.

My last comment is about your story headlines. "Liability at root of MURF risk assessment: MOE" and "Risk assessment not vital: MOE". Again we have a load of crap being force fed down your readers throat. Truth is why are you and the Packet more concerned about "Liability" which is only money and give no space to the health of your readers. Monique if a 8 year old child becomes ill from exposure to these nasty toxins do you think that he or she will rejoice that the city will now be held "Liable"? Does everything in this world revolve around money?? If your home and property becomes contaminated will having to uproot and move be made easier by the cities liability??? This headline shows how shallow the person is who wrote it. The second headline "Risk assessment not vital" is also misleading. You see Monique it is not vital to the MOE but it is vital to the city. Remember how the system works??? There is no penalty until you are caught. Risk assessments are done for the express protection of the perpetrator in order to justify a defense of their actions. The mayor, council, city management and Shaheen and Peaker have been caught short. They have been told that we now know what you are about to do. It is wrong and if you proceed here are the consequences. So please Monique at least attempt to be impartial in the future or just don't write anymore of this crap.

jim tolnai

April 13, 2005

Mayor Pinocchio's Nose Grows

Here is our question for the day. Will Orillia's mayor ever stop fibbing?? Can this guy stop??? In yesterdays Packet front page story Stevens claims that new brownfield legislation is causing a delay and possible increase in costs for the MURF. What Bull ##&*#!, what nerve. Look in the mirror Mr. Mayor and you will see the cause of all the ills that are affecting the MURF. You along with the rest of the gang of 9 and city management have done to Orillia what Nero did to Rome. You have in your infinite stupidity jeopardized Orillia's financial, environmental and possibly health future. You were warned what you were doing was undoable. You were given evidence that a five year old could understand yet you pushed on. Now it seems you are a coward and will not take responsibility

for your actions. But wait I maybe mistaken. You did speak the truth in your Christmas interview on Roger's Cable. Remember what you said when asked what would happen if things go wrong with the site? Your answer was future councils would have to deal with it. Well Ron that was at least a half truth. Not only will the next council have to deal with what you have done but possibly councils for the next 30 years.

So the mayor claims we have to see "**how the ducks line up**". Weren't we told by the head **Daffy** that they knew what they were doing?? Weren't we told to believe in Shaheen & Peakers expertise?? Weren't we told lie after lie after lie??? Now he tells us his ducks weren't lined up all along. Then to rub salt into our collective wounds these guys give themselves a **40%** raise for a job well done all the while Orillia Burns. Well folks the Emperor has no clothes and it is not a pretty site.

Citizens must take action now. The **Plume** has left the site. It does not make any difference whether the MURF is built there or not. The site has to be isolated and stabilized because of what these people have done. By digging and disturbing what was a relatively stable chemical dump before cleaning it, they have sent the **Toxins** in who knows what direction not unlike at **Love Canal**. As this Toxic Plume moves it will surely destroy property and health. What we need now is for the Minister of the Environment to step in with her powers. Take over the management of the site with local citizens participation and start to immediately stabilize the migration. Mayor, council and city management must **Not** be allowed to have anything more to do with this site. The 40,000 tons of Hazardous soil must be removed from the shores of Lake Simcoe immediately and Shaheen and Peaker must be replaced by a competent firm working with and for the people of Orillia. It won't be cheap by a longshot. What Boss Hog and the Piggies have done will add millions to the clean up costs but it has to be done. We then need a "**Forensic Audit**" of the cities books and past contracts signed. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs along with the people of Orillia should be responsible for managing that process.

We have **Spoken Out** for the last four years that things are not what they seem in Sunshine Town. The stench to us was and remains unbearable. Until you (the people) take responsibility for the people **you** put into power and demand accounting then lies and cover ups will just continue. Sure you can vote these people out at the next election, but think of the harm that can be done in the mean time. Now is the time to **Speak Out** and standup for your future. The damage done so far is huge but is nothing compared to what it can be if these people are allowed to continue for the next year and a half. Surely in our democratic system there is a mechanism in law that can be used to remove an incompetent and harmful municipal administration. Any local lawyers willing to see if there is???

Remember folks there has been over one billion US dollars (\$1,000,000,000) spent on the Love Canal site because local officials did nothing but cover up in the beginning and allowed the **Plume** to move. Let's not make the same mistake here.

jim tolnai

Mis-Information Corrected

There is at least one Orillia City Councillor who is attempting to paint an unjustified picture of Allan Millard. You see Allan as the lightning rod for having the MURF site cleaned properly and is also involved in many other worthwhile community projects. It is on one of these projects that Allan is involved in that this particular councillor is attempting to discredit him. Because the non profit housing and the MURF cleanup is so important I have asked Allan to explain the project. This particular councillor has stated that the non profit housing project that Allan is championing is not abiding by Environmental standards that Allan is holding the city to. That is just not true and shows just how desperate this particular councillor and maybe others are in the MURF War. Therefore here is Allan's historical and progress report on the "Foxfell Non Profit Housing Project".

jim tolnai

by: Allan Millard

Orillia may soon have its first units of affordable housing since ... well, nobody seems to know when the last units were built, but it has been at least 15 years. For those who care to know more, read on and you may discover some interesting history and politics.

The affordable housing project in question is called "Foxfell", a name derived from George Fox and Margaret Fell, two of the earliest activists in 17th-century England in the Society of Friends which soon came to be known, derisively, as the Quakers. Foxfell is a small project, only 12 units (4 3-bedroom, 4 2-bedroom, and 4 1-bedroom), and they are to be built this year on Rachael Road (south and west of Barrie Road and Westmount Drive).

First, a definition. "Affordable" does not mean "social" or "rent-geared-to-income" or "subsidized". Under a federal-provincial Community Rental Housing (CRH) agreement signed in May 2002 "affordable" means what Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. (CMHC) says is the average rent in a given community. For example, for Orillia CMHC said that was \$745 per month (in 2003) for a 2-bedroom unit, including utilities. The CRH program was designed to help with the cost of building but not with the operation of rental units.

There was, and still is, an ideological barrier. Conservative thinking is that governments should not be in the 'bricks-and-mortar' business, i.e. that the market will look after people's housing needs and therefore that governments, as a matter of political faith, should not build or operate housing of any kind. This thinking caused the Harris Government in Ontario in 1995 to put an end to any and all thoughts about social and affordable housing. Harris was not alone. The federal government under Chretien/Martin thought the same way, and most municipalities either adopted the same free-market ideology or were unable, fiscally, to do much about it on their own even when they had the will, as some did.

Orillia, on the evidence, was in tune with the conservative ideology on

housing and the free market. Oddly, though, Orillia found \$10 Million to build rental accommodation for a business (Teletech) to bring several hundred low-wage, low-tech jobs to Orillia. I find it bizarre that no one seems to have suggested that Orillia spend \$10 Million to build affordable rental accommodation for the workers. Orillia has money to help companies make a profit but no money for non-profit housing. The 2002 CRH agreement was not a change of heart. Governments were still determined not to get involved in housing, but by offering some limited building subsidies it was hoped that private enterprise and non-profit groups might be persuaded to build affordable rental housing. The problem was that in return for a small grant the proponent had to agree to CMHC-set rents for 15 years (or 20 years if original tenants were still there after 15). It was a scheme designed not to work but to allow governments to say that they had a housing program.

If "designed not to work" sounds harsh I would invite anyone to read the onerous conditions piled on any potential proponent by the province and one particular section which said that proponents had to bid for grants, the smallest request being the most likely to be successful, but that the government reserved the right not to award money to the lowest or to any bidder.

Now back to Foxfell and its history. In 1986 the Quakers bought the oldest house, the Mill Owner's House ("the Mill House") in Orillia and 20 acres of land around it. The house was literally falling down, but the Quakers rebuilt and restored it to be used as a Meeting House. It is now designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. From 1986 the idea of a multi-generational non-profit housing complex was part of the dream. In 1988 the Foxfell Friends Co-operative Community Corporation (FFCCC) was incorporated.

As municipal services were extended the land became more valuable and two parcels were sold to a local developer/builder, but almost one hectare was retained for Foxfell. The "profit" on the sale went into a housing development fund. The developer was also required by the terms of sale to design his future subdivision so that the Foxfell land would have a road and all services. This was finally in place in late 2002 and anyone can see the site at the right-angle turn in Rachael Road.

The site could easily accommodate more than 12 units of housing, but there was some NIMBY opposition. Some people have a hard time recognizing a good thing when they see it. A zoning by-law was passed in 1996 for medium-density housing of 12 units.

The Foxfell FCCC had wrestled with issues of ownership vs. rental, or a mix, and the problem of building well yet making the housing affordable. To shorten the story, when the federal-provincial CRH agreement was announced the FFCCC Board decided to follow the rental route to see if it could be made to work. We remain committed to operating the housing on co-operative principles even though the FFCCC will remain the owner. We also remain committed to affordability.

By "affordability" we mean two things. One is affordable rents as determined by CMHC. The other meaning is even more important: We do not believe that our planet can afford for us, humans, not to make a determined effort to build in unity with nature and to make the minimal demands on Earth's resources. We want Foxfell to be as energy-efficient and water-efficient as possible. We want Foxfell to set a new and higher standard for affordable housing, to be something of a model, not just for Orillia but for a wider area. The problem lies in those three words: As...as possible.

It does come down to money and the lack of real commitment to a meaningful role in housing on the part of all levels of government. The Foxfell FCCC is putting up almost \$400,000 of its own money with no expectation of return because it is a non-profit corporation. It is also putting up the cost/value of a hectare of prime residential serviced land. (Approx. \$100,000 has already been spent on "soft" costs like design and site preparation so only about \$300,000 is available for construction.) We see Foxfell as a Quaker gift to the wider community. The federal contribution will be \$300,000. The provincial contribution will be \$24,000 with a further \$24,000 now being considered (or so we are led to believe). The City of Orillia offers a deferral, not waiver, of development charges at 4% per annum and a municipal-portion property tax holiday of 10 years, which will really help to bring the rent within the CMHC ceiling but which contributes nothing to construction. Foxfell must then calculate how much debt (mortgage) we can service with our capped revenue. That tells us how much we can borrow for building, and the total capital available from all three sources then has to meet the estimated construction cost estimates.

At that juncture the environmental dream is shaken by financial reality. There will not be enough money to do all the energy-saving things we know can be done. Cuts must be made, but we believe we can still come up with very energy-efficient housing units. Some interesting questions arise.

If governments want to encourage us to meet Kyoto targets, what better way than to give subsidies for energy savings where we spend most of our time and which will pay dividends for 50 years? While approving of conservation and retrofitting, for example, we ask if the best return is found in getting it right in the first place, i.e. when we build. The most important question of all is when governments at all levels will recognize that we all win whenever something like Foxfell is built. It doesn't even matter whether you live there or even whether it is non-profit. It matters that the cost to the planet is too high if we do not use to the fullest the energy-saving technology which already exists.

A couple of extra details for anyone interested. All 12 units will be wheelchair-accessible and the spaces in every unit will allow for the turning-circle diameter of a wheelchair. If we can afford it there will

be an elevator, but if not there will be ground-level access to every unit (because the two-storey building will be on sloping land). The design is three quadrplexes connected in a gentle arch, the central one facing due south. There will be a common room and a guest room in the central building.

The only government-imposed income guide is that the rent cannot be less than 20% of the tenant's gross income. Foxfell intends to give preference to Friends (Quakers) but we are reasonably certain that initially no more than four units will be rented to Friends. Foxfell will be open to any person who subscribes to and will put into practice the principles of co-operative living.

For further information call Allan Millard, President of the FFCCC, at 705-326-0433 or get in touch by e-mail: millard-harnden@sympatico.ca

April 8, 2005

by: Allan Millard

Brownfield Advisory Committee???

Councillor Cipolla thinks the City of Orillia should think about having a committee with public participation to advise on what to do with 'brownfields' (former industrial sites), of which this small city has more than its share. Why Orillia has such a disproportionate share of 'dirty' land may have to do with geography and geology rather than with any unusual degree of environmental stupidity. What happened here for a century was the same as everywhere else, but Orillia just happened to have a lot of flat wetland/swamp deemed undesirable for human habitation.

Let's call this potential committee the Orillia Brownfield Rehabilitation Advisory Committee, or OBRAC. Even if it's 15 years too late, the OBRAC idea might be better late than never. Or is it? Could such a thing work for the public betterment in Orillia? I think so, but will it? I don't think so.

To begin with, on April 4 Council referred the matter to staff to make a report on how it works in other communities. If you observe our Council proceedings for more than two meetings you will know that referral to staff is the Council's habitual way of avoiding thinking. If you observe for more than four meetings, you will know that staff never brings back a report which finds any fault, implied or otherwise, with the way staff runs the city or which might encroach on the City Manager's power and influence.

It was an ominous start. Do we not have even one councillor who sees the pitfalls in referring this kind of issue, which is important, to staff?

Do our councillors not realize that staff are not the appropriate people to be giving advice on a political/governmental issue? Is there not one Councillor who can pick up the telephone or drive to Hamilton or Brantford and come back with some ideas on how to make it work in

Orillia? No. No. No.

An OBRAC now is almost an admission that mistakes were made from the secret start of the MURF mess more than three years ago. As mistake was piled on major mistake for three years there was never the slightest indication of contrition or remorse on the part of any politician or staff for the steps which will cost us dearly in health, time, and money. Admission of error is not likely to happen now.

We must Remember the attitude of Cipolla's fellow politicians towards the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC), which could well be the City's idea for an OBRAC. The EAC is kept out of the decision-making and information-sharing loop at City Hall. It is expected to be an obsequious 'yes Minister' to the Council. It appears to be a mechanism to let some people let off environmental steam, harmlessly, and to make sure vested non-environmental interests keep control. An example of that is Michael Fogarty, Vice-Chairman of EAC, who uses EAC as a partisan political stepping stone and who preaches that we should have faith in his friends on Council. Is this to be the fate on an OBRAC? I would bet on it.

What would be the terms of reference of an OBRAC? The prevailing climate in Orillia regarding brownfields is best exemplified by the City sticking stubbornly to a consulting firm which has a poor reputation for risk assessment, a reputation for being good at covering up (known as 'risk management'), and no reputation or experience in remediation. Would an OBRAC be allowed to think about and advise on remediation? In today's official Orillia you can think about it, but don't bother talking about it.

Although "environmental issues" at the site of the proposed MURF cropped up three years ago, the mayor, councillors, and staff have consistently and publicly abjured any and all remediation as being too costly (without, of course, knowing what they are talking about or having any estimates). An OBRAC would not have remediation in its terms of reference, which means it would be little more than another 'yes Minister' exercise for the Fogartys of this world. No one seriously concerned for the environment and our health would join, or stay with, an OBRAC politically foreclosed from considering remediation.

It has been reported that brownfield committees have worked in some other cities. I can see how that might be, and I can see that there is merit in the concept of a community effort to deal with serious issues of community. But I have very real doubts about how that could work in Orillia. It is not because we do not have people in the community with the talents, time, and spirit to make it work. Such people are here, but the political and administrative vision is not. Neither the mayor nor any councillor is prepared to listen to any person or committee, or share any power. They have no concept of public participation in civic affairs. We are supposed to have our say every three years and shut up the rest of the time. As we saw with the recent pay raise, they are

arrogant beyond belief, and that is the way they have been on every issue.

In considering how committees work in other cities Orillia would have to look at the civic administrations and compare them to Orillia's despotic centralization. My guess is that no other city has allowed so much power to rest, unquestioned by Council, in the hands of one unelected person. Power corrupts, they say, but of more relevance to the OBRAC issue is that power is addictive. It is not easily given up.

My conclusion is simple, but stark. However good the concept, an OBRAC will never be effective until we bring into office new politicians and staff who are neither too proud to listen to the people nor too insecure to share their power with the people who conferred it.

April 7, 2005

Councillors We Are Not Stupid!!! Wake-Up Orillia!!!

I am not surprised at the contempt council is showing for Orillia Taxpayers. These people who were placed into power because the voters trusted them have done nothing but disappointed the large majority. Their latest behavior of giving themselves a 40% raise is not a one off. These people have been responsible for consistently behaving badly. I will attempt to show how, if you give them an inch they will take a mile. Our lesson must be that when wrong takes place the perpetrator holding an office of trust must be held accountable immediately. These people count and prey on your trust to justify their actions. Trust should be earned not **Assumed**.

My political awakening began with the first term of mayor Stevens. I ran in ward 4 for council and as I went door to door people would ask me who I thought would make a good mayor. Having listened to the candidates and being fed up with the Gong Show I recommended Stevens. Being a novice I wasn't aware of Stevens record in Severn (since then I have taken the time to look) but he seemed reasonable at the time so I felt he would do a good job. He certainly has done a job on us but certainly not for us.

The election being over it turns out the mayor had accepted campaign contributions from related companies which is illegal. I was stunned and angry. Had I not recommended this man I suppose I might have not been as upset but I truly felt betrayed. It was at this point that I became politically incensed. A request was made to council for them to call for an audit of the mayors campaign. To make a long story short the request was not only denied but I and other candidates who did not run for mayor but wanted an audit were accused of sour grapes for having lost. Not unlike how we have been accused of the same behavior for opposing our collective **poisoning** by the same people at the MURF site. So instead of being held accountable the mayor paid into city coffers the \$2,000 which was the illegal portion, claimed ignorance (as usual) and got away with it. I dropped the issue and except for the odd letter to the editor went into political obscurity.

Then along comes Doug Downey who breaks the sign bylaw which he voted for. You see Doug was responsible for Kiwanis signs being placed throughout the city in contravention of the bylaw. The city bylaw officer contacted Downey to remove the signs and comply with his own bylaw. He did not. The bylaw officer contacted Downey 2 more times and each request was ignored. The officer then was left no choice but to issue a ticket. Now here is the rub. The ticket was served on Doug Downey with his name prominently right there. You see the Kiwanis Club was named, as it was their signs but Downey being an executive and in charge of the placement of the signs was named as the party being served. So what does Doug do? He calls a special council meeting and has the Kiwanis Club and himself exempted from the very bylaw these guys and gals voted for. Net result the ticket was fixed. I then took Downey to court under "Conflict of Interest" which is a useless bit of legislation making citizens responsible for enforcement. Again long story short he seemed to get away with it as the judge decided that although there was very poor judgment on Downey's part, because it was a charity that was involved he did not consider pecuniary in spite of the legislation. I must also add that Glen Wagner had asked for an exemption from the very same ticket 6 months before Downey's folly and was turned Down(ey) flat. Of course since then the owners of the Queen St. Industrial Mall have also been turned Down(ey) on their request for exemption due to circumstances. Of course Downey voted Down(ey) their request as well.

Then we have our mayor on the radio during the Power outage to curtail our use of air conditioning as we all have to conserve hydro. At the very time his tripe was being broadcast his very own air conditioners (two of them) at his business were humming away and he was sitting inside his cool office while the unwashed masses were conserving and sweating for his comfort. Now this behavior went on for the entire power outage so it was not a mistake by any stretch. Add in the land deal on the 12 acres behind Wal Mart and a whole slew of other questionables and there seems to be a **pattern** isn't there???

Now we have these very same people behaving the same way regarding the MURF. Fraudulent testing of mixed soil samples, lies, lies and more lies. I am convinced that these people have gone ahead with their 40% raise because they think you are stupid. Why wouldn't they try it??? Haven't you allowed their past behavior and allowed them to get away with it? I hope that you will now say like I did four years ago "**NO MORE**". Get involved or be prepared to keep on accepting their abuse.

jim tolnai

(For more examples, stories and evidence to past behavior go to the [Previous Issues](#) page of this site and read all about them)

April 4, 2005

City Of Orillia Hog Futures

Well! last night saw Orillia Council's **Hog Belly Futures** price go up by 40%. That's right city councillors **Bellied** up to the old trough and gave themselves a 40% raise. Doug Downey, Carl Garland, Francis Smith, George Morano, Wayne Gardy, Ralph Cipolla, Paul Spears, Tim Lauer and Mayor Stevens graciously

accepted **their** reward, awarded to **themselves** by **themselves**. Now I know Tim Lauer will claim that he did not vote for this increase but remember this, **NO One** voted against it as the **MAYOR DID NOT CALL for a NO VOTE**. Even though Lauer was asked to call for a **RECORDED VOTE** he did not. Why??? So if people like the Mayor or Tim say any different just watch their nose grow. I don't think we need be surprised by what went down last night, I believe these people have had this plan for quite some time. If there was any debate it was done in private and a long time ago. In fact I have written that most likely Garland was accepted into the **Pack** based in part on his willingness to accept higher remuneration.

So what do we do now?? There is no doubt that legally they can do this. Morally is another matter. The **TROUGH** will now be engraved with their names. It is the intention of the creators of the **TROUGH** to display it throughout the city at public events to remind taxpayers of this betrayal by the **9** little **Piggies** called council. We can only hope that Orillia will have a long memory and **Speak Out** next time we vote. If anyone is interested in displaying **The Trough** contact Kelly Clune **(705) 327-2100** or Jeanine Baker **326-1957** to arrange an opportunity to display your displeasure with the **Pack of Porky's**.

Just as a note of interest for Oro/Medonte residents, I found it interesting that Councillor Ruth Fountain Oro/Medonte (or her twin sister if she has one?) attended last night's meeting. I hope for the sake of Oro/Medonte taxpayers her presence is not an indication of things to come in that municipality.

jim tolnai

April 1, 2005

Secrecy Continues

City council continues to hold closed door meetings. Regardless of the criticism from citizens and the MOE that council's and city managements secrecy regarding the MURF project is wrong these people decide to hold a closed meeting to discuss the very report that criticized their secrecy. Hard to believe but that is what has happened. Until these people are put out of office nothing will change. It's obvious there are things to hide and I wouldn't doubt that new paper shredders will be ordered before the next election. We can only hope that people will remember and vote accordingly. We need to put a much better caliber of individuals into office who will work for the benefit of the community and not in self or party interest. It is also important to remember Doug Downey's involvement as he moves on to maybe provincial or federal politics which I believe is his ambition. Can you imagine this guy in higher office?? Couldn't he do a number on us there Eh!??? We need a Forensic Audit to clear the air. Orillia is in Political, Financial and Environmental crisis. Until the people responsible are removed we just have to keep fighting to protect us from their incompetence. Last week the mayor said that he didn't think the MOE were experts in regards to brownfields. In yesterday's paper he says he wants a meeting with the MOE so they can tell him what to do. Not a word about Shaheen & Peaker or Cynthia Robins the cities experts who the mayor and council had so much faith in???

Seems the mayor and council are now saying they really don't know what they are doing even though they claimed otherwise just a week or so ago. My how the worm turns???? Come on guys smarten up. The **PLUME** has left the site. Everyday you dick around more off site land is compromised. Remediate and remediate now, you have done enough damage already. If anyone is interested take a drive down to the site. You will see water gushing onto West St. and Queen St. from the footprint of the building. As the ground thaws water from below is forced up. Now remember the water below the footprint has "**Catastrophic**" levels of chemicals. Do you suppose the water spilling off the site is contaminated?? Have these people and their experts tested this water??? Has the MOE investigated this spill from beneath the footprint??? Will the MOE hold these people responsible for this spill if indeed it is contaminated? Must we the citizens test this water ourselves or will the MOE do it???

jim tolnai