

Expositor
Oct 2/92

Local

Resident opposes city's trunk sewer

By David Young
Expositor Staff

Brantford's new sanitary trunk sewer is a disaster just waiting to happen, says a local resident, who wants the project stopped.

The sanitary sewer line to the northwest industrial area will cross the Grand River near the Brant Conservation Area and that could mean the destruction of rare and endangered plants, said environmentalist John Hanselman.

Also, it could be a disaster for Brantford's water supply if the sewer broke because it is upstream from where the city takes water from the river, he said.

→ Mr. Hanselman has filed an appeal to the provincial Ministry of the Environment's en-

vironmental assessment branch for a full assessment on the project.

Mr. Hanselman already had one appeal rejected, but his second appeal, filed in September, lists new issues regarding rare and endangered species in the northwest industrial area.

The trunk sewer, which will connect the city's sewage treatment plant to the new northwest industrial area, is estimated to cost more than \$6.3 million.

→ The path of the sewer line is also the proposed path of a future road linking Highway 53 to Highway 403.

But Mr. Hanselman wants the work halted — at least until a more thorough environmental evaluation of the sewer's path and the industrial area can be completed.

"I want something to ensure that this area will be taken care of," he said Thursday.

And he hopes that an individual environmental assessment of the sanitary sewer project will be the "jumping board" to a review of the whole industrial area.

Mary Hennessy, a planner with the ministry's environmental assessment branch, said the branch is reviewing the project and a decision must be made within 45 days of the application.

→ She said the city has followed the prescribed steps for a standard limited environmental assessment and received approval more than a year ago.

But Mr. Hanselman argues the assessment was flawed and incomplete.

He is concerned about damage to the fish habitat and the possibility that an island, that the sewer would cross, is native land.

City engineer Alf Gretzinger said he was not knowledgeable enough about native affairs to comment on the island.

And he is confident that the trunk sewer project meets all the concerns of the environment ministry.

→ So far, much of the sewer line has been built. But the work has stopped as the city tries to appropriate property from two landowners on the south side of the river.

Mr. Gretzinger said they hope to cross the river sometime next year but the time required for land appropriation varies.

The project still has to be approved by some government agencies. The Grand River Conservation Authority, which has a say in the river crossing, approved a revised design earlier this summer.

And the authority must approve the timing of the crossing to minimize any risk to workers, said Fred Natolochny, the authority's senior regulations officers.

He said this is not an unusual project. Sanitary sewers cross the river in every major community on the Grand River.

The provincial Ministry of

Natural Resources also is involved.

Larry Halyk, area biologist, said he is reviewing the project not only to see if the river crossing will harm fish habitat, but also to see if the project could be used to enhance habitat.

In principle, his ministry is not opposed to the sewer crossing, Mr. Halyk said.

However, he added, because the ministry approves the sewer crossing doesn't mean it will approve other projects in the area — such as a road.