

OMEMEE

SEWER

AND

WATER

REPORT

REPORT PREPARED BY
OMEMEE BUSINESS & COMMUNITY
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

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The Report

When the Environmental process started, there was some interest in the project, although the meetings were not well attended. Gradually, the Community started to grasp the projected home owner s costs for frontage and connection charges and when the preferred source of Lindsay water was announced, there was much greater rejection of the idea of municipal water.

The Background

The Consultants report advises that the annual income for Omemee is \$25,857., compared to the provincial average of \$35,185.00 and that the unemployment rate is 15.6%, while the provincial average is 6.1%. Several older homes are rented at a lower rate, which attracts tenants at the lower scale. Omemee is doing more than its share in providing lower cost housing.

Omemee is an agricultural community, who s population is tied to this sector, and the change to urban will be gradual at the start. Quite likely, the area south of the rail line will be 10 to 15 years before it fully develops and then development will move north of the rail line. The 18 lot subdivision in the north east is taking two years to build out.

One controlling factor, as first reported by the Consultant in their 2004 report, is that the storm sewer system will be a future growth restriction, as parts of the village are in the flood plain. For some reason, storm sewers have not been mentioned since. The new animal control building permit holdup was more about drainage.

How much growth can occur in Omemee with only one bridge over the Pigeon River on a significant Provincial highway?

The whole spin and a great deal of engineering effort was made to justify the most capital expensive and front end loaded recommendation and far less effort was made on alternative solutions.

Water Taste

In response to the question as to why Lindsay's water has a disagreeable taste, the Consultant advised that taste starts with the source, which is not an answer. Lake Scugog is a large, slow moving, weedy man-made lake that may average four feet in depth. As a comparison, Port Perry, located right on Lake Scugog has three drilled wells south of the village that supply 1.5m gallon a day as its source to service 6,500 residents. Also, there W.P. C.P. servicing about 6,000 people, discharges into the quite small Nonquon River and likely now, a growth restriction with a 6,000 population on the system.

It is known that a brown field south of Mary Street in Lindsay was used for about 60 years as a munitions factory and the area drains into the Scugog above the intake. The Mariposa drain will drain wide farming area, as well as be adjacent to a former sanitary land fill site, discharging above the intake. The Scugog River passes by two cemeteries above the intake. The Sediment & Biological Investigation of the Scugog River, shows that the River has a high level of pollution and it just doesn't all start in Lindsay. The taste is likely caused by a high level of algae, but the river has other problems.

The City of Kawartha Lakes is proposing to sell a product that for some unexplained reason, does not taste as good as the product that Omemee residents now have, to a high unemployed area, at about \$5,000.00 per home. The 100 odd homes presently without sewers, will see their costs double.

Rail Trail

The proposal calls for the City to either purchase or enter into an agreement with the Ontario Realty Corporation to obtain an utility easement along the old railroad right of way, between Lindsay and Omemee at a distance of 16 kilometers. No mention is made of the easterly 12 kilometers from Omemee which contains a wooden bridge over the Pigeon River of about 120 feet and a 400 feet long, 75 feet high steel structure north of Cottingham.

The report details the required fencing on both sides of the west section with repairs and replacements costing \$440,000.00. This will pit neighbour against neighbour on who gets what and the City of Kawartha Lakes will be caught in the middle. The landscape contractor suggests that a new fence would be beneficial, but no estimate was given. Fence costs are to be charged to Parks, Recreation & Culture, which makes them a general expense and not in any of these sewer and water estimates. No estimate is supplied of annual maintenance, which would counteract some operating sewer and water estimates in this report.

The Peterborough Rotary Club provided funds for the two bridges decking and barriers east of Omemee as well as various control posts, but nothing on fencing. The Ontario Realty Corporation would likely be happy to download responsibility and liability of the whole trail to the City of Kawartha Lakes.

Walkers and bicycle use is generally acceptable, but snowmobile cleats are causing havoc with the 500 feet of new bridge decking making it difficult for walking and bicycles and adding considerable to maintenance. Council knows the difficulty of multiple use.

Omemee has housing on both sides of the trail. Trail improvements could create a motorized speedway from Lindsay to Peterborough and back, causing noise and pollution. The proposed official plan calls for higher density just north of the trail and east of Sturgeon Road, as well as adjacent housing by the trail on the Regal property. Allowing motorized use means that the official plan should be revisited.

Private interests through sponsorship funds may provide for capital and maintenance, however, sometimes private interests do not have the staying power to stay with a project and the municipality has to pick up the ball.

Work on the trail would be on 25 feet on one side of the rail bed with sewer and water 8 feet apart, therefore there would be considerable soil disruption. Also considerable brushing is required. Is an environmental assessment required for the effect of this construction on an old Railroad line next to farms and the food chain?

The use of the trail may seem appropriate from an engineering point of view, but raises the following questions:

1. If only an easement is required, why spend \$440,000.00 for fencing on both sides? Is the municipality being led along to be involved in the trail? Is it politically acceptable to spend public money on private fences?
2. How do you treat future fence repairs that did not just meet fence repair needs in this project? Are those on the east side being treated the same?
3. Is Environmental Assessment required for extensive disruption of an old railway bed?
4. Who will control the use of the trail, provide policing, structural improvements for 100 year old bridges, capital improvements and liability insurance?
5. Will zoning adjacent to the Trail need to be changed because of noise and pollution? Do you want a house next to the trail?
6. Any forcemain breakages on the trail would likely be slower to being discovered because of less traffic than mains on a road allowance. It would be more difficult for a truck and big equipment to have access and to make repairs on the rail traveled portion, barely 15 feet wide.

The above issues are not addressed in this report. The Trail will be a bigger liability than an asset.

is a different audience. It reflects some of the public input, but the main thrust is the same.

Our first report promoted a new W.P.C.P. North of Beaver Trailer Park with a gravity main trunk parallel to the River to the rail line just west of the River. With the Sturgeon River Street Pumping Station about 6 feet higher than the Church Street Pumping Station because of the mill pond dam and only 1500 feet apart, it was felt that the Sturgeon Street Pumping Station could flow by gravity to the lowest pumping station in the Village. It would take some effort but one larger, lower pumping station would reduce some capital and long term maintenance. This would have also eliminated a future Beaver-Pigeon Pumping Station. Lindsay got rid of their downtown pumping station and Sturgeon Street Pumping Station within a block of the four corners has been a nuisance. New land costs were justified by the cost of private fences being not required. The grade and the flow of the river and an entirely new W.P.C.P. location may cause Environmental assessment problems.

A Lagoon W.P.C.P. location would not require land and an Environmental assessment would be only changing a lagoon to a sewer plant at the same location. In regard to the concerns of discharging the treated product into the River, one wonders why it cannot be recycled by using one of the lagoons as a holding site. If it is clean enough for the river, it should be clean enough for land.

The City owns the 70 acre lagoon site and a 100 acre unopened adjacent gravel pit and the treated water could be used for washing gravel. Try to develop a recycling use for treated effluent rather than river discharge. If the treated water holding ability didn't match volume and outside uses, then discharge to the river in the existing outflow pipe could occur when the river volume is highest. The Church Street Pumping Station could pump to the Sturgeon Road forcemain just as easy as the Sturgeon Street Pumping Station.

We are a City of Lakes and this would demonstrate that the municipality is concerned about how our lakes are treated. The approach should show to the Provincial authorities that the City is trying to take advantage of a treated water supply

in a unique way. It falls into an environmental friendly approach that should fit the current trend. Catch the Kawartha Spirit!

K.P.O.W. were quite critical of the Consultant's present standard design of W.P.C.P. plants and talked about more automated and newer designs. We got literature on ZENON equipment, but since you have a facility in Fenelon Falls of theirs, the O.B.C.I.A. does not wish to make any comment.

Advantages

1. Eliminates the lagoon pumping station and 15.6K of forcemain to Lindsay. Toronto has found that over time, the more pipes in the ground, you increase maintenance and replacement costs, while this report looks mainly at plant costs.
2. You remove K.P.O.W. objection to any additional waste being transported to Lindsay with additional by-product being discharged into the already severally polluted Scugog River.
3. It reserves more capacity in Lindsay as Provincial Policy requires more housing density in urban areas like Lindsay resulting in more treatment capabilities.
4. If development in Oakwood gets into sewer trouble in the future, the only answer may be to pump to Lindsay as there is no river outlet.
5. When combined with the water suggestion, it allows council to make any decision on the rail trail on its merits only.
6. Expanding the existing plant was the cheapest proposal and other possible savings have been suggested.

The Environmental assessment wanted public input, but Professionals don't like laymen questioning their professional opinion. Sometimes fresh thinking is helpful, as they may get locked into one solution.

Cost Comparison

When comparing the costs for the three alternative solutions reported in the Information Centre report dated September 27, 2006 with these final estimates you learn that both a new Omemee plant and an expanded existing Omemee plan had their costs reduced by \$460,000.00 each while the proposed Lindsay plan preferred option had costs reduced by \$2,070,000.00. If engineers could reduce costs estimates by this much from a prior public meeting, you would think they would be happy to explain the difference.

The report is justified by the engineers on reduced plant operation costs over 20 years. The proposed costs for plant operation seem high, but the City of Kawartha Lakes has most of the cards to play as to how costs are allocated. Council should require extensive breakdowns on this item. After any of the works are constructed and if savings don't occur, who will know and what can be done about it?

WATER

_____ The attached petition of over 400 signatures advises that Omeme residents are happy with their private wells. The petition from Victoria Glen states that they protest the proposal to change their present City water source to that of Lindsay s as they believe their taste is superior. Even those on wells prefer their taste over that of Lindsay s. More petitions can readily be obtained if necessary as the milder weather has arrived.

At the public meeting on February 28th, attended by about 100 local citizens, a form was supplied to those attending asking to indicate their comments the O.B.C.I.A. presentation. Attached is a recap of the replies received.

The well testing showed 9 dug wells out of 12 and 26 drilled wells out of 108 exceeded the maximum acceptable concentration (0/100ML) coliform counts, but for some strange reason, no table was supplied of the actual counts of the tests. This zero standard is meant for municipal treated water. Those on private wells have learned that the Health Units have historically used the limit of five counts per 100ML in the absence of a chlorine residual as acceptable water quality. With the detail missing, one expects that their argument was weak. Coliform may come from the well or even originate in the plumbing. Routine javex maintenance may keep the count down.

A few 100 year old dug wells in the old part may have a problem. Durham Region has a program through the Conservation Authority that will subsidize well upgrades.

None of the three Public Information meetings mentioned nitrates which was a contributing factor to extend water to Oakwood. The Executive Summary states that two wells showed elevated readings. The one off Queen Street South may reflect a failing septic system and the other may be use of lawn fertilizers. No counts were supplied, therefore they likely did not exceed the objective of 10.0MG/L.

Well records make it clear that average well yields are quite high in comparison to many other areas in Ontario and volume is not a problem.

If the sewer capacity is repaired, then infilling could occur and the Victoria Glen subdivision water system could be expanded to service another 50 homes. The small 18 lot subdivision in the north east is taking about 2 years to build out, so the market is not that great. Don't get too far ahead of the market.

The report talks about some existing wells that are not properly decommissioned. If you put in a municipal water system, you now have about 500 more wells that would need to be decommissioned. Drilled wells would cost from \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00 dug wells from \$1,500.00 to \$1,800.00 each. These costs would be on top of frontage charges.

Our biggest complaint is with how the hydrologist report was used, as he never addressed any meeting. The entire hydrologist report was based on background data and no actual well drilling and therefore he uses such phrases as may require up to 15 wells thereby covering himself. Then the financial costing is based on this upper limit, thereby driving the ground water system estimates both for construction and operation to its highest level.

All the cluster wells are shown as being in the service area. With three connected wells to each cluster, it means that these pipe locations influence how the street pattern may develop. Movement of traffic and drainage would be influenced by well locations.

When Port Perry was looking for water, rather than use Lake Scugog, they conducted bore test holes outside the service area, thereby removing this planning restriction. Omeme is about three miles wide between two hills on the east and west and restricted somewhat from expanding to the south by the mill pond. Its public knowledge that Youngs Pit about ½ kilometer from the service area in the west, has a 10 year permit to extract up to 3000 litres a minute for gravel washing. The consultant was advised of a spring fed fish pond about the same distance from the service area in the east. Both local well drillers have never had troubles drilling for water in Omeme.

developer to put in his own water system and this aquifer was NEVER intended to be the main operation area for a full Omemee water system.

The Hydrologist essentially recommended that a number of private wells be repaired or upgraded, but for some reason, this recommendation was not put forward by the consultant.

If you are going to spend 10 million dollars for water, it seems logical that a more detailed and thorough assessment for a local water option be taken and there are likely good locations for ground water tests just outside the service area. Was the consultant given a specific area to look for water?

Well drillers tell us that the best opportunity for a ground water source would likely be in the east. The only developer in Omemee is the new owner of Regal property and he probably has his hands full trying to bring the old plant into a viable asset. If the City were to take the lead in drilling test holes in this general area and find a suitable source to at least start a new municipal system, they would have a developer ready to lead some new growth in Omemee.

This would provide a better tasting municipal system, open up some new growth and improve the financial viability of Omemee. The City could extend the water system more on need basis into the older areas and would give time to further develop an expanded ground water system. Even if it fails, the City has shown it tried and has supplied some growth with full services that would be geared closer to demand.

The sanitary sewer situation should be faced, but don't forget that storm sewers are also a constraint.

General Economic Overview

_____ One asset that Omemee has is an extensively cleaned up 88,000 square feet, practically vacant industrial building that the new owner is trying to rent. Its at a good l

location between Lindsay and Peterborough on the main highway and the area has a

high rate of unemployment looking for work. Let's get an expanded City Development Department to work very hard to bring employment to Omemee. 50 to 100 jobs would go a long way toward improving the financial viability of Omemee.

Water will come to Omemee in the future, but the report shows that the residents do not have a need because there is no volume or quality problem. The push for water starts with the proposed official plan that says in 25 years the population will increase by 2,000 and then the engineers propose to construct a facility that will now meet this projection. It doesn't seem to matter that an area with 15% unemployment and no water problem cannot afford it. For a long time, the City will have fewer customers paying for a system that can handle close to 2,000 more. If staff got down to the Omemee grass roots, they would better understand the financial restraints of the community. I know, because it took me a while to grasp the situation.

Housing development has had a long successful run that has driven housing costs to new heights. CMHC expects a soft landing from the boom. G.M. our largest area employer is having difficulty producing an environmental friendly product to match competition. Our City's largest employer, Fleetwood is having some staffing adjustments, as their product is influenced by gasoline prices and the availability and the suitability of high powered tow vehicles. We don't want a Smith Falls. The Federal Government advises that Kyoto implementation will cause a collapse.

These signals suggest it is more prudent to relate your new borrowing more closely to your annual principal payments. The City can likely borrow \$22,000,000.00, but should be more concerned with the users ability to pay their utility bills. Don't get too far ahead of serviced land for the housing market.

It is noted that five candidates ran for office in Wards 14 and 15 as well as six candidates for Mayor, but not one ran on a platform to spend \$10,000,000.00 for water in Omemee. Most candidates for public office expound on new services they want to bring to their electors at election time but it didn't happen here.

Recommendations

1. That the City not use the rail trail for sewer and water.
2. That the City construct a new sewage treatment plant at the Lagoon site to service Omemee. That they explore recycling treated water on their own and adjacent land.
3. That no action be taken on a water system at this time because no need was shown that Omemee has a quantity or quality problem. That the City conduct some drilled well tests for a possible new underground water supply for Omemee, and work with a local developer to start a City water system.
4. That the City concentrate the effort of their Industrial Development Department to provide tenants for the large vacant industrial building in Omemee thereby providing employment and improving the financial well being of the Community.

*****Give us an Omemee solution to an Omemee problem.*****

Omemee Business & Community Improvement Association

Forbes McEwen

Vice-President O.B.C.I.A.