

The Corporation of the Town of Lakeshore
Report to Council

Chief Administrative Officer



To: Mayor & Members of Council
From: Truper McBride, CAO
Date: December 4, 2020
Subject: Denis St. Pierre Water Pollution Control Plant, Sanitary Sewage Capacity

Recommendation

This report is for information only.

Background

The Town continues to experience a healthy growth rate, which has exceeded the growth anticipated in the Town's 2010 Official Plan. The northwestern portion of the Town is located in the service area of the Denis St. Pierre Water Pollution Control plant ("the plant") as shown in the attached area map.

The plant was identified as nearing hydraulic capacity in the Town of Lakeshore Water and Wastewater Master Plan Update, dated May 2018.

In keeping with the recommendations in the Master Plan, the Town has taken several steps to address the plant capacity issue.

- First, the Town completed an optimization study of the plant in 2018 that resulted in a slight plant capacity rating increase.
- Second, the Town initiated an Environmental Assessment (EA) process to expand the capacity of the plant in 2019. The Town has completed the EA process and filed the Notice of Completion. Council budgeted \$2.2 million in the 2020 budget and the Town's consultant commenced the engineering design work for the plant expansion. The expansion will essentially increase the size of the plant by 70%, making future growth within the service area possible and rectifying the capacity issues that the plant is currently experiencing.
- Thirdly, the Town continues to investigate and repair storm water infiltration into the sewage system. The Town has investigated this, and has determined that the high precipitation and higher than normal lake levels may be contributing to the

flow rates. The Town continues to monitor infiltration into the system, while continuing to increase investments into repairs and has budgeted work over several years to rectify the infiltration.

Comments

The municipality has continued to experience growth and increased flow rates into the plant on an annual basis.

The average flows for 2019 indicated that the plant was operating at 92% of its rated capacity, however a review of this year's (2020) flows has identified significantly higher flows observed by comparison to 2019. 2020 experienced a total increase to the plant's average flow by approximately 13%.

This increase is attributable to new development hooking up to the system (building permits) and the impacts from the coronavirus pandemic which has encouraged residents to remain at home (water usage), affecting both water and wastewater usage patterns. The Town experienced an increase in water usage by approximately 10% in 2020.

In light of the current emergency of the pandemic continuing well into 2021, it is anticipated these higher flows may continue to be experienced in 2021, or potentially later.

With this unexpected increase in flows the plant is now operating, on average, above its rated capacity.

This capacity issue will need to be addressed by taking additional action identified below until the Denis St. Pierre Water Pollution Control plant expansion is complete and additional capacity is made available.

1. Approved Land Use Planning Applications

The applications that have already been granted approval to proceed in the service area of the plant have been analyzed. These approved applications include vacant lots in draft approved and registered plans of subdivision and development through the site plan approval process and those with servicing agreements.

These approved applications represent an expected increase of 8.3% of the plant capacity.

In addition, there are a small number of lots of record in the service area which could be built on which are not included in the above.

Administration recommends honouring these prior commitments, and will recommend final approval to site plans and plans of subdivision and condominium to the County of

Essex (the approval authority) should developers wish to advance their development applications.

Administration does not anticipate all of the applications representing the 8.3% of the plant capacity moving forward before 2023 based on past building permit activity.

The flows at the plant will be monitored closely and/or alternatives assessed to see how to accommodate the additional flows until the plant expansion is completed.

Coordination with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks will be required.

2. Applications in process – Finish the Review Process and Make a Decision

There are also previous agreements and/or development proposals that have been received and are under review in the Denis St. Pierre Service Area. To provide notice, Administration has been advising developers upon receipt of application that there could be limits in the capacity granted, due to the need to expand the sewage treatment plant. This has been in the form of verbal discussions and written notes following pre-application meetings since February 2020.

Residential developments will continue through the review process and when a decision is made, draft plan conditions and clauses in subdivision agreements will be included advising that connection to the system will not be permitted until sanitary sewage servicing capacity is available.

Commercial and industrial development will be managed similarly through holding provisions, added at the time that site plan approval is granted. The “H” provision will be removed when sewage capacity becomes available.

3. Applications not yet received

For those applications that have not been received, and based on the Town’s Official Plan, administration will be accepting applications but will defer processing.

Section 7.3.2 Servicing Allocation & Phasing of the Official Plan states:

“The following will be the policy of the Town:

- a) *When unallocated servicing capacity does not exist for a proposed development, the Town **will defer the processing of the planning application** until capacity is available, or until a servicing agreement is in place to ensure that such capacity will be available to service the development within one year of the granting of the planning approval. Draft approved plans of subdivision may only proceed to registration if sufficient servicing capacity continues to exist.”*
[emphasis added]

To be in conformity with these policies of the Official Plan, Administration will defer the processing of new planning applications in the interim until the plant expansion construction is tendered and approved by Council in early fall of 2021. After Council approval of the tender is received, processing planning applications will resume.

The construction of the plant is expected to take 1 ½ years and plant commissioning is expected in the spring of 2023. In the interim, Administration will continue to monitor the flows into the plant.

A summary of the three categories of development is summarized below.

Stage of development applications	Administration's actions	Timing of connection to Denis St. Pierre STP.
1. Approved applications in existing draft approved subdivisions, condominiums, site plans and areas with cost sharing agreements	The proponent can proceed with development	Capacity has been allocated – timing of connections are up to the proponent.
2. Applications in process and those with cost sharing agreements.	Review, and where applicable, recommend for approval, with conditions or holding provisions	Connect when sewage capacity is available or plant expansion is commissioned (Spring 2023)
3. Applications not yet received	Defer processing of the application until the plant expansion has been tendered (Fall 2021)	Connect when plant expansion is commissioned (Spring 2023)

Processing of Other Applications

It is noted that planning applications can continue to be received and processed in the areas of the Town outside of the Denis St. Pierre servicing area. Planning staff will also continue to process site-specific applications in the Denis St. Pierre service area which have no impact on servicing capacity such as consent to sever applications, minor variances, zoning by-law amendments and site plan amendment applications. Planning staff will also be engaged in long range planning work such as the Official Plan review, Wallace Woods and Lighthouse Cove Secondary Plans, and the comprehensive zoning by-law update.

Conclusion

With the steps that the Town is taking to increase the size of the plant, the capacity issue is a short term challenge that will be rectified in the near future.

Administration will communicate this information to the development community and work closely with the County of Essex, as the approval authority for plans of subdivision and condominium.

Others Consulted

The County of Essex Planning Department and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks were consulted regarding this matter.

Financial Impacts

The financial impacts have been included in the 2021 budget to commence with the expansion of the Denis St. Pierre Plant. The 2021 budget approved \$7.5 million towards some initial construction costs. The construction of the plant will continue into 2022 with an expected total project cost of \$29.2 Million, including engineering and design.

There could potentially be decreased revenue from building permits in 2022-2023 and the resulting delay of new tax assessment. This impact will be monitored by staff.

Attachment 1:

Denis St. Pierre Water Pollution Control Plant Servicing Area (Belle River/Maidstone)
Map

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Denis St. Pierre Water Pollution Control Plant, Sanitary Sewage Capacity .docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1 Denis St. Pierre Water Pollution Control Plant Servicing Area.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Dec 7, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

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