

As one of the conditions for operating the expanded Carp Road Landfill, Waste Management had to establish a **Public Liaison Committee (PLC)** to “provide a forum for public concerns to be raised and for mitigation measures to be discussed where appropriate”.

We’re beginning to find out how inadequately the PLC is meeting those goals.

The PLC was established in 2014 and had its first meeting in June that year. It has 12 voting members, including two members from Waste Management, five City of Ottawa councillors from neighbouring wards, three residents and two members of the local business community.

Here are some of our concerns about the committee:

1. ***“Public” Liaison Committee meetings are closed to the public!***

COLA asked if a representative could sit in on future PLC meetings as an observer. Councillor El-Chantiry, the PLC’s chair, responded that meetings are not open to the public. Under the terms of reference, PLC members who speak to the community *must ensure their views reflect the consensus of the PLC*. We were told that we can’t attend, because we might hear dissenting views around the table.

Contrast that to Waste Management’s Twin Creeks landfill in Southwestern Ontario: **Their** PLC meetings **there** are completely open to the public. Anyone can request to make verbal presentations of up to 15 minutes. Only confidential matters are dealt with in-camera.

2. ***The PLC’s terms of reference muzzle city councillors.***

The terms of reference state: “Members who speak to the community must ensure that the views and information shared are that which reflects the consensus view of the PLC.” Effectively, that means that councillors can’t freely express a point of view that contradicts the consensus of the PLC, whatever that may be. We think that councillors should be free to speak their mind on ALL matters relating to the landfill.

3. ***The criteria for PLC public members is unclear***

The resident and business members of the PLC were selected in 2014 by local councillors after a rather poorly advertised application process. Details of the selection and biographies of the selected candidates have never been made available to the public they represent. The terms of reference don’t define criteria for selecting members, nor are there any guidelines for how long they can serve for.

4. ***The PLC web site is inadequate.***

The PLC is required to have a website providing email contact information, functionality to receive and reply to comments from the public, and publish notices of meetings and minutes. What’s there now is a bare bones web page that fails to address most of these requirements. There is no email posted to contact the PLC, there are no bios of the members, no dates for upcoming meetings, and minutes are

often not published until months after a meeting has occurred. *(You can visit the web page here: <http://wcec.wm.com/wcecplc.asp>.)*

COLA (Coalition for Landfill Accountability) represents eleven local community associations, with a mandate to educate people on the landfill and encourage public engagement in the development process. As well, COLA wants to ensure that all commitments made during the approval process are carried out.

COLA believes that West Carleton Environmental Centre Public Liaison Committee must:

- a) open meetings to the public
- b) ensure greater transparency and communications
- c) clarify terms of reference around the selection of public members
- d) update its terms of reference to allow all members – especially councillors – to speak freely on all issues relating to the Carp Road Landfill

You can read the full terms of Reference for the Carp Landfill PLC here:
<http://wcec.wm.com/documents/our-vision/WCEC%20PLC%20TOR%2025Aug2014.pdf>.