



## C4CA Newsletter #1 November 2009

### Welcome to C4CA News!

This is the first edition of the newsletter for the new Citizens for Clean Air C4CA organization. This format will be used as a means of keeping you (members and volunteers) updated on recent, current and planned activities regarding the Ontario Government's plan to locate a 900 MW Power Plant in Oakville. We encourage you to read this newsletter to stay informed and use it to assist you to inform others including family, friends and neighbours. Effective and efficient communications, and your personal commitment to be actively involved right now, are of the utmost importance in opposing the Power Plant. We have to stand together to make our voices heard, and ultimately to have the decision to build the Oakville Generating Station (OGS) reversed.

Although a large natural gas Power Plant should be located at least several kilometres away from any highly populated residential area, the Oakville site was selected by the Ontario Government. This violates sound, ethical and rational planning principles.

As a united front we can and will mount a challenge to the Ontario Government's decision to locate the Power Plant literally down the street, some 400 meters from the closest homes, with more than 11,000 homes within a 3 kilometre radius.

We would like to thank you for taking an active interest in this matter. Our community, and most importantly our children, depend on our collective interest and willingness to jump in and make a difference. As you have generously offered your time to volunteer, we would like to clarify the areas where help is needed. In addition to the list provided here, if there are other areas where you could provide assistance please notify us (see contacts below).

### Core Messages

There are many aspects and levels on which the OGS is a bad decision, however, our focus as an organization will be on certain core themes, which at this time include the following:

1. The plant will pollute an already over-polluted area (particularly CO<sub>2</sub> and PM2.5) - a full Environmental Assessment (Individual) is required.
2. The proximity of residents and schools is untenable – homes are located within 400 meters, and there are more than 11,000 homes and over 16 schools, plus numerous daycares, within a 3 km radius.
3. The Plant is not needed at this time – demand for electricity has been declining due to a number of factors, and other power plants have recently been built or are under construction in the GTA, so there is time to plan in a rational manner.
4. The Plant is not free – If the agreement between TransCanada and the OPA is like other agreements of this kind, it contains a lucrative guaranteed rate of return clause which exposes Ontario taxpayers to potentially big payments.
5. There is an alternative – there are other non-residential locations where the plant would be welcomed, and the Ontario Power Authority OPA originally considered a transmission scenario as a viable alternative to local generation.

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### This Past Week

**Oakville & Mississauga Youth:** The Environment Club at Oakville Trafalgar High School (OTHS) led a Youth March and Rally last Wed. Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>. The event was a huge success with an estimated 400 youth actively participating despite the rain and chilly temperatures. The students made the march from OTHS to Chisholm Academy on Cornwall, to be welcomed by pizza, hot chocolate, music and dancing. In addition to the youth there were many parents out supporting the youth as well as a number of media outlets who covered the story.

We should all applaud the willingness of the youth in our communities to stand up and ask that their views be heard on a matter that impacts their homes, health and futures.

### Current Activities – Here's How You Can Help Today!

**Street Captains:** One of the most important requirements we have right now is to appoint a Street Captain for each street in Oakville and West Mississauga. The role of Street Captain is to act as the point person on your street; ensuring residents on your street are informed, have signs on their lawns and are aware of activities underway so that each and every household can actively participate. Additionally, the Street Captains are looked upon to lead the fundraising effort for their street, or find the appropriate person on their street to undertake and own that responsibility. To sign up as a Street Captain e-mail: [StreetCaptains@C4CA.ORG](mailto:StreetCaptains@C4CA.ORG) with your name and address.

**Fundraising:** To oppose the Power Plant in a meaningful manner we must hire expertise in the following disciplines: legal, environmental and health. Of course it takes money to accomplish this ; fundraising is key to obtaining the necessary expertise. Your help is needed now to make a donation, and to sign up to conduct the fundraising effort on your street. To make a donation, visit [www.c4ca.org](http://www.c4ca.org). To become a Street Captain, see above.

**Awareness:** Lawn Signs are available for the price of \$20. We would like to see a lawn sign on each and every lawn in the area to demonstrate support for the cause. Funds raised from the sale of lawn signs will be used toward other awareness programs. To order a lawn sign visit [www.c4ca.org](http://www.c4ca.org). Buttons are also available for a price of \$2 and are to help build awareness. The slogans are as follows: STOP POWER PLANTS NEAR HOMES AND SCHOOLS (buttons or signs), POWER PLANTS AND HOMES DON'T MIX (lawn signs only). Posters will also be made available. If you require a poster for your business, or if you know of someone who does, simply visit the C4CA site to order.

**Events:** More events are currently being planned. If you are willing to take the lead to organize an event, that would be welcomed. Send a note to [info@c4ca.org](mailto:info@c4ca.org).

**Other Activities:** Buttons will be sold at retailers around Oakville and Mississauga. If you have a storefront, business or other location and could make them available, please contact us and we will make arrangements to have a quantity delivered to you for distribution. Visit the C4CA web site to place your order.

**Expertise Required:** We require expertise in many areas including: Legal, Health, Environmental, Engineering, Fundraising, Public Relations, Youth, and Administration. We also require immediate assistance with graphic design, web management, and multi-media requirements. Please contact us at [info@c4ca.org](mailto:info@c4ca.org) if you can assist in any of these areas.

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### Committees

A number of committees have been formed including Fundraising, Health, Environment, Legal, PR and Communications, Youth, and Government Relations. There are numerous activities underway in each of these groups. We require expertise in each area. If you have specific expertise that you can offer please contact us – we would welcome your support. Simply send an email to [info@c4ca.org](mailto:info@c4ca.org).

### Milestones

There are a number of activities that have taken place during the course of the past month and a half.

**OMB Hearing:** The OMB Hearing was held Oct 13-20<sup>th</sup>. In fact the Chairman of the OMB Hearing requested an unscheduled evening meeting of plant proponents, Oakville residents and Town officials at Town Hall to gain a more complete perspective on residents' opposition.

A ruling by the OMB Chair on the legality of Oakville's Interim Control By-Law and Official Plan Amendment is expected soon. Whether the outcome of the OMB Hearing is positive or negative there is still much to do. The ruling, even if positive, will simply delay TransCanada's plans for a few months, although it buys some time to get other work underway. To re-emphasize, the work to oppose this Power Plant has just begun.

**Special Town Council Meeting:** The Town of Oakville also held a special Council Meeting on October 20 to gauge residents' opposition to the plant. Council Chambers were packed. Council passed several motions requesting information on the RFP process and requesting the level of Environmental Assessment be increased to an Individual (full) Environmental Assessment. C4CA made presentations as well, and suggested changes to the motion. All key changes were accepted and passed by Council.

### Actions

**Extensive Team of Experts:** We have assembled a strong team of volunteer experts across many disciplines including Health, Environmental, Financial, Engineering, Legal, Communications and other. With this team in place we are developing a comprehensive strategy to deal with the threat of this plant being built. In addition we recently retained outside legal counsel.

**Town Council:** We are in communication with all levels of the Town of Oakville including council, staff and outside advisers with the intention of coordinating our efforts to the greatest extent possible.

**Other Key Supporters:** We are also coordinating our efforts with numerous key supporters including the City of Mississauga, the Region of Halton, the Region of Peel, and many of the residents' associations throughout Oakville and Mississauga.

**Freedom of Information Act:** We are currently in the process of making requests, under the Freedom of Information Act, for the release of information and documents (about the proposed OGS) in the possession of various government departments and agencies.

**Upcoming Meetings:** A number of important meetings are planned for the near term with the various groups involved in the planning of the project.

**Open Letter:** We have placed an Open Letter in The Oakville Beaver Friday November 13<sup>th</sup>. This provides the C4CA perspective on the planned Power Plant. A copy of the letter has been included at the end of this newsletter for your convenience.

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### Your Involvement Is Needed Now!

Thank you for your willingness to help with this initiative. The stated intention to build the Power Plant in this location creates a reaction in each of us. We ask that you channel your concerns in one of the many ways outlined above. Sign up today to be a Street Captain and make a donation to help oppose this Power Plant.

Stay tuned for the date of an upcoming informational meeting for you, the volunteers and members of C4CA.

Thank You!

### An Open Letter from Citizens For Clean Air (C4CA)

#### Re: Proposed Oakville Gas-Fired Power Plant

##### What is C4CA?

Citizens for Clean Air ("C4CA"), a non-profit organization, is a coalition of volunteer citizens from Oakville and Mississauga who are very concerned with the proposal to construct a large gas-fired power plant extraordinarily close to many homes and schools, beside critical railway lines, and in an already over-polluted area with high levels of respiratory health problems. **C4CA believes that we are all being rushed down a path that defies common sense, and that this power plant should not be built at the proposed site owned by Ford of Canada ("Ford").**

We are committed to ensuring that there is a full and proper assessment of the proposed gas plant's impact on the environment, the community, residents and others who would be exposed to its emissions. C4CA is asking for full and immediate disclosure of all information and agreements relating to the power plant, its bidding and selection process, and the Ministerial actions that began and guided that process. We are also seeking genuine consideration of whether Ontario needs this plant and, if it does, whether the proposed location is the best of all possible alternatives.

##### Where would the Proposed Power Plant be Built?

A 900 megawatt natural gas power plant to be built and operated by TransCanada Energy Ltd. ("TransCanada") is being proposed for a narrow strip of land owned by Ford between Cornwall Road and Royal Windsor Drive in a quiet, established, residential community in east Oakville. The plant would be extraordinarily close to schools and homes, the nearest being only about **400 metres away**. **Six schools** and an estimated **1,000 homes** would be **within 1 km**, **10 schools** and an estimated **5,000 homes** would be **within 2 km**, and **16 schools** and an estimated **11,000 homes** would be **within 3 km**.

It is extremely unusual to build a large fossil fuel plant close to homes and schools because, among other things, this defies common sense, good planning and sound science. Proper planning and assessment leads to plants with **much larger buffer zones**, preferably in sparsely populated locations. This **common sense approach is missing here**.

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Consider that recent amendments to Ontario's laws strictly prohibit placing even a wind turbine with a generating capacity of 1.5 megawatts within 550 metres of homes. Yet this proposal would put a 900 megawatt fossil fuel plant much closer than that to both homes and schools. It is therefore up to Ontario citizens to step up and be heard if we are to avoid a potential cocktail of risks and hazards and a legacy that we would all regret. It is important that we **put ourselves on a more sensible path.**

### About the Proposed Power Plant

Key information includes:

- The 900 megawatt power plant would be **one of the largest gas-fired power plants in Ontario**, capable of producing enough electricity for an estimated 900,000 homes
- **Hundreds of tonnes of known toxic substances** would be discharged into the air, including ultra fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) that is inhaled deeply into lungs and has been linked to reduced life expectancy and a variety of serious health effects
- These chemicals would be discharged into an air shed that is recognized as **already overly-polluted** and into a community with **high levels of respiratory health problems**
- Oakville and Mississauga are being **surrounded by other new fossil fuel plants**, including the recent Goreway station in Brampton, a power plant under construction in Halton Hills, and a gas plant being developed in Mississauga
- **Significant noise and vibration** from the power plant, especially severe during ramp up periods, would likely create serious impacts to health and quality of life
- **Huge volumes of water** would be used by the plant, and great amounts of wastewater/sewage would be discharged by it, with **potential for significant impacts on people, Lake Ontario, wetlands and wildlife**
- Vapour clouds (water plumes) would be **visible for kilometres** and would produce periods of **fog and icing** that would likely create serious threats to residents and to safety and efficiency along the adjacent railway lines and roads, including the QEW
- The plant's location beside railway lines creates added **risks in the event of a train derailment**
- Despite its extraordinary features, the plant is **being fast-tracked** with an argument of urgency, even though Ontario's official electricity operator, the IESO, has forecast ample existing power capacity for many years into the future
- Twenty year energy supply agreements of this kind typically include **guaranteed profits for the operator** which, in some cases, have led to huge taxpayer-funded costs – even if the plant sits idle.

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The Montreal Gazette recently quoted Hydro Quebec's CEO as saying that suspension-of-production deals with TransCanada cost taxpayers "about \$130 million, \$140 million a year" to have recently constructed plants sit idle

- **Local governments have not had a chance to conduct their assessment** of the power plant's impact on the community, and are not being given the time they need to do so
- The Town of Oakville, the City of Mississauga, the Region of Halton, and the Region of Peel are **unified in their unanimous opposition to this project**
- TransCanada is following only a simple screening/environmental review level environmental self-assessment, under which it can **unilaterally decide** what the impacts may be, whether an impact is important, and whether the project should proceed

### Missing Information, Unanswered Questions and a Flawed Process

Many questions are being raised about a process that was **started by the former Minister of Energy and Infrastructure under cover of a green energy policy**, but that is now taking us down a path that **defies common sense and responsible social, health and environmental planning**. Action is needed to get information and answers, and to put ourselves on a better path of common sense, transparency, and proper assessment and planning.

### What Should be Done?

1. **We deserve full disclosure of all information related to this project, which would have enormous and serious effects for many decades.** The Ontario Government (including the Ontario Power Authority, the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, and the Ministry of the Environment), TransCanada and other organizations should release all agreements and information related to the proposed power plant, including the bidding and selection process and Ministerial actions. Ontario citizens deserve nothing less - it is our environment and lives that would be impacted if this plant were to proceed.
2. **There must be an individual environmental assessment of the proposed gas plant, with involvement by both the provincial and federal governments.** The potential risks and special qualities of this project cry out for a proper, individual environmental assessment. Only in this way will TransCanada be able to honour its own public statements that "impact to people and the environment will be vigorously studied as part of the environmental review process", "community input is a key component of the development" of the project, and that it is "committed to meeting the highest regulatory standards". A self-assessment process is wholly inadequate, and we trust that the Ontario Government and TransCanada will do the right thing - we deserve nothing less.

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3. **Local governments should be allowed the chance to do their jobs.** Local governments should be allowed sufficient time and information to properly assess the proposed power plant's impact on the community. No one should be allowed to skirt these municipal powers and responsibilities.
4. **We need to know how much this will cost Ontario taxpayers.** All profit guarantees, incentives and other agreements that could expose Ontario taxpayers to significant costs should be disclosed.
5. **Alternative paths need to be explored.** There should be genuine consideration of whether Ontario needs another fossil fuel plant and, if it is needed, whether this residential location is an appropriate location and the best of all possibilities.
6. **Concerned citizens must act quickly.** Beginning with the former Minister of Energy and Infrastructure's original directive, efforts have been made to put this project on a short timeline. TransCanada is now moving quickly to remove obstacles in the way of its **targeted mid-2010 construction start**.

### What is Ford's Role?

Ford has entered into a transaction to provide TransCanada with the land for the proposed site. C4CA was very pleased that, in its November 4 "Open Letter to Oakville", Ford expressed support for local residents' request for increased information from the Ontario Power Authority with respect to the site selection decision. We also note that Ford has clarified that it is not partnering with TransCanada, and that it is encouraging additional dialogue between the Ontario Power Authority and local residents.

In addition to these actions, we respectfully call on Ford to:

- **clearly state that, like the community as a whole, it does not support the power plant project** and that it shares the concerns expressed by other citizens and by local governments
- **actively assist and support our call for an individual environmental assessment**, including involvement of the provincial and federal governments, and our call for answers to the many open questions
- **release all information and agreements** it has about the proposed plant or its location, including conditions to closing its transaction, arrangements for TransCanada's use of Ford lands and property for construction facilitation, and any proposed use and/or transfer of Ford's rights to easements, water taking, water pipelines, wastewater facilities, licenses, permits, conduits, rail lines or otherwise.

C4CA would also appreciate any funding support Ford is prepared to provide to it, other citizens groups, or the Town of Oakville in this respect.

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We applaud Ford's global efforts to become an environmentally responsible company, and its commitment to the health and safety of its own workers in the community. We hope that Ford shares our concerns about the proposed gas plant and that it will work to help put us on a better path.

### How Can You Help?

C4CA has assembled a strong team of legal, regulatory, environmental, health and medical, engineering, financial and other experts. But the efforts of all concerned citizens and local governments have only just begun. Although time is of the essence, **it is not too late for you to make a difference.**

TransCanada must show that the proposed power plant will not harm the community and its people, and must comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations. You can still make a difference.

Doug MacKenzie  
President C4CA

**TAKE A STAND. IT'S NOT TOO LATE. DONATE TODAY!**  
**Go to [www.c4ca.org](http://www.c4ca.org) for more information.**

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