

Protest blocks street

April 12/04

PROTESTERS OPPOSE LOCATION OF ETHANOL PLANT

By SCOTT STEPHENSON
The Observer

Residents from Aamjiwnaang First Nation blocked access to Vidal Street, behind the Suncor refinery, for several hours Saturday to make people aware of their environmental concerns over the company's proposed ethanol plant.

"We want Suncor to start paying attention to our concerns because they haven't been," spokesperson Wilson Plain said.

Suncor has the right to dig under the roadway to maintain or install pipeline and build over the road to install or maintain hydro lines, he said, but Suncor doesn't have the right to travel on the road to service their tank farm and pumping facilities in that area.

Plain said, in the event of an emergency, the roadway would have been reopened.

"We acknowledge the Aamjiwnaang community's concerns about our proposed ethanol plant. We have made no decisions on a location for this proposed plant," refinery vice president Kirk Bailey, said in a press release issued later in the day.

Ethanol site moves to St. Clair

Sat: April 24/04

SUNCOR OFFICIALS NO LONGER LOOKING AT LAND NEXT TO FIRST NATION

By CATHY DOBSON
The Observer

St. Clair Township Mayor Joe Dedecker calls this a great day for Lambton County.

Suncor is abandoning its plan to build a \$120-million ethanol plant adjacent to the Aamjiwnaang First Nation and setting its sights on a new location in St. Clair.

Suncor officials said Friday they hope to start construction in 2005 at the southwest corner of Hwy. 40 and Rokeby Line on a world-class plant employing about 35 full-time workers.

Construction of the \$120-million project will create up to 250 jobs next year, they said.

"In consideration of economic, environmental and social issues, we feel this site in St. Clair Township is much better," said Suncor spokesperson Neil Levine Friday.

The company originally wanted to build the plant on property it purchased next to its existing facilities. But the proposal disturbed Aamjiwnaang residents who didn't want ethanol produced across the street from their homes and offices.

The natives have staged a lengthy demonstration, blocking access to Vidal Street behind the Suncor refinery to make people aware of their environmental concerns.

On Friday, Aamjiwnaang residents reacted to Suncor's decision with cautious optimism.

"Until something very official is on our table, we have to

take it day by day," said band council member Darren Henry.

He said the band's biggest concerns related to the smell that ethanol plants can produce, as well as encroachment on First Nations lands.

Suncor's new site selection is "a good thing" for the Aamjiwnaang, Henry said.

The band wants the property that Suncor owns adjacent to the First Nations to be left as green space.

"We want it protected as a greenbelt because we consider it our buffer from industry," agreed Vicki Ware, an Aamjiwnaang resident, who has been involved in the protest.

She said band members won't be satisfied until Suncor officially declares the St. Clair site as the definite choice.

Suncor has an option to purchase about 200 acres from several farmers immediately south of the Nova plant at Rokeby Line and Hwy 40, according to Dedecker.

"It's really a good site for an ethanol plant," he said. "It's rezoned for industrial use and there's very few neighbours."

He estimated that about 10 homes are within a couple miles of the new proposed site. Those residents shouldn't be concerned about prevailing winds or odour from ethanol production, Dedecker said.

This week, he toured a similar plant in South Dakota where thermal oxidizer technology is used and found no odour at all.

See ETHANOL, A2

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Unless they're the kind of questions that determine where the rubber really starts to meet the road.

Before we get upset about the Aamjiwnaang objecting to this encroachment on their boundary and the health threat to their people, we need to ask ourselves a few questions: Would I want Suncor to build this plant beside my home (or beside my children's or grandchildren's homes)? Would I think it okay to build this plant in Bright's Grove or in the north end of Sarnia?

However, I have not seen many letters in objection to an ethanol plant which Suncor proposes to build beside the Aamjiwnaang community. This certainly will have both positive and negative effects on our community, especially the Chippewa First Nation.

For Sarnia, the positive effect will be job creation. For the Chippewa, there is no positive spin-off. It will mean expanded health problems for themselves and their children. For Suncor, I'm sure it would be difficult to change the location, but not impossible.

Location of ethanol plant subject of concern

OPINIONS - The OBSERVER Friday, March 26, 2004 Letters to the Editor

Ethanol project funded

Observer Sat. Feb 14/04

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES MILLIONS FOR PROPOSED SARNIA PLANT

By GEORGE MATHEWSON
The Observer

A proposal to build the nation's largest ethanol plant in Sarnia took a major leap forward Friday when Ottawa chipped in \$22 million for the project.

The infusion of federal cash means Suncor Energy could break ground as early as this summer on a \$120-million facility able to produce fuel-grade ethanol from corn or other grains.

"We're bringing together a traditional industry in Sarnia, one that's oil based, with our farm neighbours," Sarnia-Lambton MP Roger Gallaway.



Gallaway

"Remember, Lambton, Kent and Essex counties are the most productive farmland in all of Canada."

The proposed ethanol plant — the largest of seven to receive \$78 million in federal funding yesterday — could help Canada meet its Kyoto commitment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

It would also would create 35 to 40 permanent positions, 250 construction jobs and have a positive impact on the farming

community, said Tom Ryley, Suncor's executive vice-president.

"This is a commitment on everyone's part to cleaner fuels and cleaner air."

Ryley said the project still needs regulatory approvals, final engineering and site selection.

Suncor recently purchased 164 acres north of Churchill Road between Vidal Street and Tashmoo Avenue. But the Aamjiwnaang First Nation is opposed to a plant on its doorstep because of concern about odours and emissions.

About two dozen band members staged a protest outside Suncor's gate Friday.

"We're not opposed to ethanol," said Vicki Ware. "We're opposed to it being next to our community."

Inside, Ryley told reporters that the Churchill site has advantages because it's adjacent to the company's gasoline refinery. But it's only one of three in the Sarnia area still under consideration, he said.

"It's got to be a site that works for us and that the local community is comfortable with."

The plant proposed is a world-scale facility that would produce up to 208 million litres of ethanol fuel annually, making it by far the largest in Canada.

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