

Brome Lake: Decelles versus Paradis

By Charles Bury

SHERBROOKE — Pierre Paradis says he's not meddling in municipal affairs but simply doing his job as environment minister by taking a long look at Brome Lake's plan to build sewers to the Auberge du Lac condominiums and Fisher's Point.

In an interview in Quebec City Wednesday Paradis avoided strong criticism leveled at him earlier in the day by Brome Lake Mayor Gilles Decelles.

Decelles issued a rare communiqué Wednesday to express his frustration at what he called "patronage" behind the snail's pace evolution of the controversial sewer project, which was officially launched in 1987 and has cost the town nearly a million dollars — without a single ditch yet dug.

SUPPORTED PLAN
"In 1987," Decelles wrote, "Pierre Paradis supported and helped the previous mayor and the promoter of the Auberge du Lac Brome project to get the



Gilles Decelles... 'Unacceptable and a form of patronage.'

Société Québécoise d'Assainissement des Eaux, the Ministry of Transport and the OPDQ working together to facilitate a \$5.2 million project to relocate the road and bring sewage collection to Fisher's Point, in view of eliminating the great risk of pollution emanating from substandard installations at Fisher's Point."

A municipal election followed and that fall Decelles took over with an entirely new town council.

"Following the election and after shrinking the project to \$2 million, eliminating the road relocation and deciding to charge over 50 per cent of the cost to the users, the current administration endeavoured to complete the project, which includes a cycling path above the way of the pipe," the communiqué said.

'APPARENT SUPPORT'
"Over the past three years the council has benefited from the apparent support of Pierre Paradis," Decelles added. "The minister on numerous occasions has assured me and the councillors privately and publicly that he would issue a decree for its realisation if it was stopped by residents or lobby groups."

Decelles says the Brome-Missisquoi MNA "has consistently led the council to believe that he supported it and that he would help if need be."

SECOND THOUGHTS
But the mayor says he started suspecting this May that Paradis was having second thoughts. At a business dinner in Brome Lake, Decelles said, "Paradis' ambivalent speech raised doubts in my mind as he tried to reassure two property owners along the railway bed, who do not want the bed converted into a bike path, by

saying that there were some problems with technicalities."

And by mid-July, staff at the town hall, the SQAE and MENVIQ engineers had all done their work, he said, and all expert approvals had been granted — "only to find that the minister of the environment is using discretionary power to stop the project."

WAITING ANXIOUSLY
The sewer project, "for which close to \$1 million has already been spent, is anxiously awaited by the hundreds of residents who need the service."

The larger community would benefit as well, Decelles said, because the sewer line would be coupled with "an extraordinary bike path on the shores of Brome Lake, which would be accessible to the whole population."

"All this is being delayed by the use of discretionary power

on the part of the minister and is totally unacceptable," added Decelles, who has announced he will not run again when his term ends in November.

Paradis' delaying "becomes even more unacceptable and a form of patronage when it is done in response to three or four party funders resisting the prospect of people cycling by their property on the railroad bed."

"I therefore invite Mr. Paradis to stop delaying the project by use of discretionary powers and to get out of municipal politics."

PROTECTING THE LAKE
Paradis replied that he is simply trying to do the best thing for both the environment and Fisher's Point taxpayers. "My main goal is the protection of the lake," he said in Quebec City. "I have asked the department to look over studies that were submitted to us by

the municipality, to be able to answer to the residents of Fisher's Point."

"Are they polluting either the lake or the underwater table? If they are, can it be fixed by a local system or do we need a pipe that brings it to the main system of the town. Those are very simple questions."

Paradis was asked if he is delaying the project — putting it on Environment Quebec's huge back burner? "No, no, we're treating it as a very important matter."

MANY TIMES
"The town has changed its mind many times," Paradis added, "wanting to build a pipe first under the road, now close to the lake, different routes, etcetera. We think the town is the boss of the project, but we have to make sure that environmentally speaking, all necessary precautions are taken, and that's what we're doing."



Pierre Paradis... 'The town has changed its mind many times.'

Tough rules for waterways soon to apply in farmland

SHERBROOKE (DH) — All waterways in agricultural zones will be protected now that Quebec is ready to adopt tougher environmental regulations, says Environment Minister Pierre Paradis.

In a communiqué Wednesday Paradis announced a Liberal cabinet decision to adopt modifications to a 1987 law which protects shorelines and flood plains in farmed areas.

"These important modifications aim to assure protection of all lakes and waterways in agricultural zones," the Environment Ministry communiqué said.

Once the regulations are adopted farmers will be required to maintain a three-metre buffer zone along the edges of shorelines and flood plains. There was no indication when the new regulations will go into effect.

LIMITED PROTECTION

The original water-protection regulations adopted in 1987 "applied to agricultural zones around the following waterways: the Saint Lawrence River, the Gulf of Saint Lawrence and only their tributaries," the communiqué said. "With these modifications,

all waterways will be protected, while before only about 25 per cent of these were part of the protection," it said.

Paradis' announcement went on to say that the new regulations were "wished for by a large number of municipalities."

Once the regulations take told towns will have to adjust their urban plans to conform with the Environment Ministry's new laws, Paradis said.

The buffer zones are designed to cut down on manure, chemical fertilizer and pesticide runoff into the province's lakes and rivers.

"The action became necessary not because of the residents of Fisher's Point," Paradis said. "The project of bringing a pipe became necessary because of the building of new condominiums around Brome Lake, and that's when everything came into fast action."

"So what we're saying is that we need to make sure the lake is protected, but we need to make sure that the tools that are used are the best or the most adequate tools."

Does that amount to meddling in municipal affairs at election time? Frequent council-critic Louise Sheils and former mayor Homer Blackwood are running to replace Decelles.

"I don't think that's fair," Paradis said, "because as far as I am informed, because it is in my riding, I know that some candidates are running that are opposing the project; some other candidates that are running are for the project."

With Bill Brown and Mark Kelly

Customs alert: Klansman banned

By Sue Montgomery

MONTREAL (CP) — Canada Customs has issued an order to employees to seize copies of the Ku Klux Klan newsletter crossing the border from the United States.

The July-August edition of the *Klansman*, which appeared recently on Montreal-area doorsteps and front lawns, has been declared hate literature by Canada Customs, said department spokesman Don LaBelle.

He said copies of the 12-page tabloid were smuggled through border crossings but officials are now on the lookout for further issues.

"We get 30 million entries of things every year and we can't catch everything," he said in a telephone interview from Ottawa. "We try to keep alert for this stuff but unfortunately this got through."

The July-August issue contains a front-page article detailing the Klan's expansion into Canada and accuses Jews of trying to break up the

country.

It also features phone numbers and ads for white-supremacist products, including a T-shirt with Martin Luther King's face caught in a rifle's cross-hair.

The League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith praised the Customs move calling it "important and praiseworthy."

The League also sent a letter Wednesday to Gil Rémillard, Quebec's justice minister and attorney general, asking him to authorize charges against the Klan.

Under the hate propaganda section of the federal Criminal Code, no charges can be laid without the consent of the attorney general.

'FAN FLAMES

"There is no place in Quebec nor anywhere else in Canada for the hate mongering of the Klan," said League national chairman Stephen Scheinberg. "The Klan seeks to fan the flames of racism in our country, in a period where intergroup tensions have already

resulted in considerable pain and suffering."

Nicole Beaulieu, an aide to Rémillard, said the issue is being studied and an answer is expected before the end of the week.

Public Security Minister Claude Ryan said however that it is not up to the government to decide whether the Klan is guilty.

"First of all it has to be established if it is an illegal organization and if it has broken any laws and if so, a complaint has to be filed either by the citizens and the police so the courts can decide," he said in Quebec City.

But Sherbrooke Crown prosecutor Michel Pinard said he does not need Rémillard's authorization.

He said the prosecutor's office and Quebec Police are investigating an incident in which the May-June issue of the newsletter appeared in Quebec and will decide in 10 to 15 days whether charges will be laid.

North Hatley finds a way around right-of-way rules

By Steve Meurice

NORTH HATLEY — Town council here seems to have found a way to prevent 10 families from losing lakeside land they have leased from Canadian Pacific Railways for as much as 40 years.

A deal is in the works in which CPR is to sell nearly 5 million square feet of land on Lake Massawippi between North Hatley and Ayer's Cliff. An association has been formed to buy the land and then resell it to the tenants.

But 10 families in North Hatley lease lots smaller than town bylaws allow. The bylaws require that lakefront properties have at least 50 feet of frontage in order to be registered. Eight of the 10 families have only 30 feet, and two have 20.

But after seeking legal advice, town council found that it can probably make an exception for the tenants and allow them to register the smaller lots.

Part of a new urban plan which North Hatley is preparing includes a section which permits "minor derogations", or exemptions, from bylaws. Council believes this section

could be applied to the lessees.

"I don't think there will be a problem," said Mayor Irène Pelletier. "I think we can settle this."

EXEMPTION

Under the rule, the tenants will have to apply to council for the "minor derogation." Council must then notify the public that an application for the exemption will be heard at the next council meeting.

Residents in zones adjacent to the one requesting the exemption can then express their opposition or support.

The applicant must show that the exemption won't infringe on a neighbor's rights, and that a refusal of the exemption would "seriously prejudice" the applicant.

Council would then either accept or reject the application. James Samson, who has leased lakeside land for 19 years, said he was glad at the outcome.

"It seems to imply that we can be accommodated," he said. "But it seems like an awful lot of paperwork for such a little thing."

Three cottagers in adjacent Hatley Township haven't been

so lucky. They have been told by the association buying the land from CPR that they won't be allowed to buy their lots. They've been told they will have to move or tear down their cottages because they have no road access to them.

The cottagers, one of whom has been there for 40 years, have hired a lawyer to protect their interests. They have declined to comment while negotiations are under way with the association.



Irène Pelletier... 'I don't think there will be a problem.'

Three dead in propane blast

DRUMMONDVILLE (CP) — Three brothers died and their parents received severe burns trying to save them after a propane tank exploded in the family's camper van Wednesday.

The family was driving near Drummondville, 80 kilometres

northwest of Montreal, when the explosion took place in the morning, the Quebec Police Force reported.

The names of the dead have not been released. They were aged 10, 17, and 19.

The family is from the St-Hyacinthe region, near Montreal.

"There was an accidental leak of propane gas, and it was probably from the propane fridge or propane tanks in the van," said Serge Montpetit, a QPF spokesman.

Montpetit said the driver managed to pull the van over to the shoulder of the road, but a fire which completely destroyed the interior of the van followed the explosion.

Montpetit said the fire must have started when the gas came in contact with a source of heat, possibly the fridge itself.

The parents were taken to hospital suffering from severe burns.

Police said chemists from the provincial Justice Ministry forensic laboratory will inspect the vehicle to determine the cause of the explosion.

First-degree murder charge against Smith

SHERBROOKE (DH) — A 19-year-old recaptured prisoner will be charged today with the first degree murder of an Eastern Townships man.

Kevin Smith is to be charged with the murder of Lennoxville resident David Crawford, 20.

The Quebec Police Force consulted a Crown prosecutor who "decided it was first-degree murder," QPF spokesman Tom McConnell said Wednesday.

If found guilty Smith, who spoke with a local reporter while on the outside, faces a minimum sentence of 25 years in prison with no chance of pa-

role, his lawyer Peter Downey said.

"They claim they have a good case against him," said Downey, adding that Smith will plead not guilty and choose trial by judge and jury — a formality in a murder case.

FIRST TO ESCAPE

Smith escaped from the Sherbrooke provincial prison June 11 and was recaptured July 30, 21 hours after describing his escape and violent past to a *Record* reporter. He is the first person to escape from the year-old detention centre.

Two days after Smith's arrest, Crawford's body was found in a wooded lot in Hatley

Township, behind the residence of Smith's parents.

Crawford had been shot in the face and chest. Police at the time said Crawford's body had been there "a few days." The QPF refuses to say whether the murder weapon has been found or what motive could have led to the brutal killing.

In a telephone interview Monday Coroner Marc Dauphin was equally tight-lipped.

"The police must first finish their investigation," Dauphin said.

Ogden man fined \$1400 for illegal garbage dump

SHERBROOKE (DH) — An Ogden resident has been fined a total of \$1400 by the Environment Ministry for having an illegal tire dump on his land.

Lucien Rodrigue was fined \$1000 for allowing his land to be used for dumping old tires, an Environment Quebec communiqué said Wednesday.

The dump was being operated without a required permit from the Environment Ministry, the communiqué from Environment Minister Pierre Paradis' office said.

Rodrigue was fined an additional \$400 for "omitting to take measures on four occasions to ensure his land was free of garbage at all times."

He broke Article 134 of the provincial law on solid waste.