



## 7.6 (a)

A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

February 6, 2025

**SENT BY E-MAIL:** [mayor@hamilton.ca](mailto:mayor@hamilton.ca)

**CITY OF HAMILTON**

71 Main St. West, 2nd Floor  
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

**Attention: Mayor's Office and City Council**

Dear Mayor Horwath and City Councillors

**RE: Delegation by Erin Davis to City of Hamilton Public Works Committee  
City of Hamilton Bridge #113 Rehabilitation Project, Sulphur Spring Road, Ancaster  
Ancaster Well No. 8**

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We understand that Erin Davis recently made a delegation to the City of Hamilton's Public Works Committee, purportedly to make submissions with respect to an aspect of the Bridge #113 Rehabilitation Project on Sulphur Springs Road in Ancaster, but that it quickly became apparent that the real purpose of her delegation was to air grievances regarding the history and function of Ancaster Well No. 8.

The Board of the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority ("**HRCA**") has also heard several delegations from Ms. Davis regarding Ancaster Well No. 8, both in 2017 and 2024. Her submissions in 2024 became repetitive and, ultimately, abusive.

We therefore write to provide explanatory context and the HRCA's position on the matter.

Ancaster Well No. 8 is located on lands that were transferred from the Town of Ancaster (now, the City of Hamilton) to the HRCA in 1998. There was an agreement entered into at that time, which included a stipulation that the HRCA would "maintain in perpetuity continued public access" to Ancaster Well No. 8.

In 2017, drinking water standards in Ontario were updated via new provincial regulations, reflecting the most recent science. It was found that Ancaster Well No. 8 did not meet the updated standards, given that there would now be a lower tolerance for arsenic levels in drinking water. A Hamilton Public Health directive classified Ancaster Well No. 8 as a "small drinking water system", and it is subject to the new regulations. HRCA staff identified treatment to remove the arsenic or closure as options. At that time, in 2017, some members of the public—including Ms. Davis—delegated to the HRCA Board regarding their concerns about a potential closure.

In part due to the public input, instead of closing Ancaster Well No. 8, there were significant safeguards introduced, including a fence and gatekey system. Public announcement of the reasons for the change was made, and notice was posted via permanent signage at the Ancaster Well No. 8 site. The gatekeys were only given to individuals who signed a liability waiver indicating that they

were aware the water is arsenic-bearing and that the water is not for human consumption. This method of access was shared with and reviewed by the City of Hamilton Medical Officer of Health.

The fence and gatekey system operated uneventfully until early 2024. At that time, planned roadworks relating to the Bridge #113 Rehabilitation Project led the HRCA to announce and provide notice to all gatekey-holders that there would be a temporary closure of Ancaster Well No. 8. This was due to the fact that the Bridge #113 Rehabilitation Project would temporarily interrupt access to the parking lot adjacent to Ancaster Well No. 8, and there was also the potential danger posed by excavations and construction vehicles in the area to consider.

Several of the same individuals who had delegated to the HRCA Board in 2017—including Ms. Davis—again delegated in 2024 to raise concerns about the planned temporary closure. The delegations on the subject, including two by Ms. Davis, were heard over the course of several HRCA Board meetings. Some of the delegations submitted that any closure of Ancaster Well No. 8 would be contrary to the agreement to maintain public access in perpetuity.

The HRCA's position is that it has always complied with all applicable laws and obligations, and that the law recognizes that public amenities may have to be temporarily closed from time to time, including to accommodate construction works. However, the HRCA Board again listened to the public's concerns. HRCA staff collaborated with City staff and the contractor, and it was determined to be possible to safely maintain partial access to Ancaster Well No. 8 during the period that the Bridge #113 Rehabilitation Project would be underway—daily access would be limited to after construction hours, but it would not end, even temporarily. The HRCA Board considered this an excellent compromise.

Unfortunately, Ms. Davis did not. She made verbal allegations against HRCA staff and Board members during the HRCA Board meetings on July 4, 2024 and September 5, 2024, including from the Gallery outside of the time that had been set aside for her delegation to speak.

The HRCA Board passed a motion on September 5, 2024 stating that it will not receive any further delegations on the subject of Ancaster Well No. 8, unless there is a change in the relevant legislation or the Board directs any change to access in future. Ms. Davis' further delegation attempts have been declined on that basis, and Ms. Davis has been advised, in writing, that her conduct was unacceptable and that meetings with HRCA staff would also be declined. Ms. Davis has not been prevented from attending HRCA Board meetings. Her position (and that of all other delegations on the subject) has been heard, in full. She has been provided with the contact information for the HRCA's legal counsel and directed to send any further correspondence to them. She was also notified that if she has concerns about the Bridge #113 Rehabilitation Project, that is not a matter over which the HRCA has any control, and she may need to address them to the City of Hamilton's Public Works Committee. We understand Ms. Davis has taken that to be an invitation to try to raise the same issues again, in a different forum.

We hope the content of this letter will be of assistance. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.



Brad Clark  
Chair, HRCA Board of Directors



Lisa Burnside  
Chief Administrative Officer, HRCA

cc. Matthew Trennum, City Clerk