

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

PROPONENT: Maple Leaf Meats Inc.
PROPOSAL NAME: Maple Leaf Pork Hog Processing Plant
CLASS OF DEVELOPMENT: Class 1
TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT: Meat Slaughtering Plant
CLIENT FILE NO.: 4289.2

OVERVIEW:

An Environment Act Proposal, dated May 4, 1999, for a stage 2 operating licence was submitted to the Department by Reid Crowther & Partners Ltd. on May 18, 1999, on behalf of Maple Leaf Meats Inc. The proposal describes that a 1-shift 6 day/week production rate would entail the processing of 9,000 hogs per day or 54,000 hogs per week, and that a 2-shift 6 day/week production rate would entail the processing of 18,000 hogs per day or 108,000 hogs per week. The Proposal was complemented with an expanded and updated Environmental Assessment report based on their previous construction stage Environmental Assessment report.

As a separate document, but linked to the Environment Act Proposal requirement to evaluate the socio-economic impacts of a Proposal, the Proponent filed a Socio-economic Impact Assessment report with the Department on May 11, 1999.

Although the hog processing facility is presently still being constructed under the authorization of Environment Act Licence No. 2311 S1 RR, the proponent is requesting an operating licence at this time in order to facilitate the smooth transitioning to the commissioning and operating stage of the hog processing facility by the end of August, 1999.

The Proposal outlines that under operating conditions, pre-treated process wastewater from the Maple Leaf Meats hog processing facility will be directed to, and treated by, a new wastewater treatment facility owned and operated by the City of Brandon, and located on the property adjacent to and northerly of the hog processing facility property. The new wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) has been designed and constructed to accept and treat the all the process wastewater (including wet manure) generated by a 1-shift operation of the hog processing plant. This will restrict the operation of the hog processing plant to a 1-shift production rate until such time as the new WWTF is expanded to accommodate a 2-shift hog processing production rate, and is upgraded, if deemed necessary, to mitigate adverse impacts on the Assiniboine River due to excessive nutrient loadings. Sanitary sewage from the hog processing facility will be directed to the new WWTF, all inedible renderable waste will be hauled to Rothsay in Winnipeg for rendering, while edible renderable substances will be rendered on site at the hog processing plant. Blood from the kill room will be collected and hauled to APC Nutrition in Calgary, with any excess hauled to Rothsay in Winnipeg. Dry manure will be collected and disposed of in accordance with an approved Manure Management Plan.

Groundwater protection measures have been incorporated, and an ongoing groundwater monitoring program is proposed.

The Proposal was advertised in the Brandon Sun and in the Portage Daily on May 22, 1999, and in the Portage Herald on May 25, 1999. The Brandon Sun advertisement was repeated on May 29, 1999. Copies of the Proposal were placed in Public Registries at:

.. /2

- 2 -

the Environment Library (Main) in Winnipeg; the Centennial Public Library in Winnipeg; the Western Manitoba Regional Library in Brandon; the Portage Plains Regional Library in Portage la Prairie; and the Manitoba Eco-Network. The closing date for the receipt of public comments was specified as June 18, 1999.

Copies of the Proposal were also sent to the applicable members of the interdepartmental Technical Advisory Committee for their review and comment by no later than May 18, 1999.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

As of June 27, 1999, a total of 15 public responses were received by the Director in response to the advertised Proposal. These submissions came from:

- E. Dyck;
- S. Degryse;
- V. Cassidy;
- M. Burch;
- A. Sanburn;
- M. Ward
- J. Andruski (including a petition signed by 106 persons)
- Unknown (a petition signed by 41 persons)
- D. Abbe
- D. Kattenburg for the Westman Community Action Coalition;
- R. Dalmy of The Organization, a Provincial Coalition for responsible resource management;
- Friends of the Assiniboine River Basin
- A. Rosgosin;
- A. Chambers; and
- W. Paton, Associate Professor, Department of Botany, Brandon University.

In summary, the sentiment of the majority of these letters expressed displeasure with the licencing process, identified concerns for the protection of the environment, expressed objections to the issuance of a licence, and requested that public hearings be held on the proposed hog processing plant and the associated wastewater treatment facility. One of these letters contained a petition, signed by 106 persons from the City of Portage la Prairie, requesting a public hearing on the potential environmental impacts associated with Maple Leaf Meats' Proposal. Technical critiques, comments and considerations were offered by Alice Chambers and Bill Paton.

Including all the signatures on the submitted petitions, about 115 persons in total requested that a public hearing be held by the Clean Environment Commission on the Proposal, or in conjunction with the City of Brandon's Maple Leaf wastewater treatment facility Proposal.

Disposition of Comments from the Public

All the submissions were acknowledged, and copies of all technical related comments were provided to the proponent on June 28, 1999, and copies of all the public responses were sent to the public registries on July 7, 1999. The proponent's responses were received on July 8, 1999, and copies of these responses were sent to the public registries on July 15, 1999, with copies of the relevant responses directed to the authors of technical comments.

.../3

- 3 -

COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Natural Resources commented that:

- Whereas a large amount of total phosphorous will be emitted from the plant, with the impacts of the increased nutrient loading to the Assiniboine River still have not been fully defined.
- The possibilities of further reducing the nutrients in then plant's waste stream do not appear to have been addressed.
- Options such as separating solid waste from the liquid wastes, and the use of constructed wetlands, are two approaches that should be considered.
- More information should be provided on the contingency plans for avoiding direct waste input to the Assiniboine River in the event of a major breakdown in the wastewater treatment plant.
- No mention is made of the potential changes that may occur to downstream habitats as a result of the effluent discharges.
- Water allocation for this proposal should be considered in conjunction with existing commitments and the need to ensure that a minimum instream flow is maintained in the Assiniboine River.

Disposition

The comments were referred to the proponent for reply. Copies of proponent's responses were sent to the public registries, with a copy forwarded to Natural Resources for their information and additional comment, if necessary.

Manitoba Health commented that:

- The Environment Act Licence should:
 - ensure that containment measures meet appropriate guidelines;
 - ensure the maintenance of current inventory list in designated areas;
 - make provision for the review of the emergency response plan;
 - prevent pollutants and contaminated wastewaters from entering the sewage disposal and municipal ditch systems;
 - address ammonia refrigerant , gasoline and diesel regulation;

- ensure adequate surface and groundwater protection; and
- ensure the development of a community advisory group.
- Monitoring programs should include:
 - an analysis of existing air monitoring station data after 1 to 2 years of plant operation;
 - periodic sampling and groundwater monitoring;
 - river monitoring, including bacteria and protozoa.
- Land application of any sludge or manure should not include any untreated human sewage.
- The total phosphorus and total nitrogen loading issue needs further clarification. Specific questions were specified.
- The operating licence should be granted only for a 1-shift operation in order for formal evaluation of the monitoring program to occur before starting up a 2-shift operation.

Disposition

The comments were referred to the proponent for reply. Copies of proponent's responses were sent to the public registries, with a copy forwarded to Manitoba Health for their information and additional comment, if necessary.

.. /4

- 4 -

Air Quality Management commented that:

- The odour nuisance clause should be incorporated into the operating licence for this facility.
- The construction phase Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) made no mention of edible rendering operations to be undertaken at the plant. A process description of the edible rendering to be undertaken does not appear to be included in the operational phase EIA.
- The referenced Figure 6.3.6 is missing from the EIA.
- The projected 0.4% increase in greenhouse gases is significant given that Canada agreed to a 6% reduction from the 1990 emission levels by the years 2008 to 2012. Maintenance of the greenhouse gas emissions will be important to ensure that the emissions don't increase further in the future.
- Maple Leaf should be encouraged to participate in the national climate change Voluntary Challenge and Registry Program.
- The noise nuisance clause should be incorporated into the operating licence for this facility.

Disposition

The comments were referred to the proponent for reply. Copies of proponent's responses were sent to the public registries, with a copy and the missing Figure 6.3.6 forwarded to Air Quality Management for their information and additional comment, if necessary. They reported that the proponent's response was satisfactory, but that consideration should be given to requiring source sampling in the licence. The draft licence incorporates this provision.

Water Quality Management commented that:

- Design plans of the truck washing facility should be provided outlining the measures used to contain and manage the waste generated at this site.
- The status of the groundwater monitoring program be further outlined.

Disposition

The comments were referred to the proponent for reply. Copies of proponent's responses were sent to the public registries, with a copy forwarded to Water Quality Management for their information and additional comment, if necessary. They reported that the proponent's response was satisfactory. However, they cautioned that with respect to the truck wash building, the concrete floor slab joints should be regularly maintained to minimize any loss of polluted wash water.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada commented that the provincial "minimum stream flow"(7Q10) flow rates used to date for licensing and allocation purposes does not, to their knowledge, based on an Instream Flow Needs (IFN) analysis on the Assiniboine River that would consider the biological requirements of the aquatic resources of the Assiniboine River. Such an analysis would use an IFN method such as the Instream Flow Incremental Methodology. The Manitoba Fisheries Branch and the Manitoba Water Resources Branch have taken the lead role in initiating the required studies, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada have undertaken some studies in recent years which can provide valuable data towards such an IFN analysis. They would expect that users of the water will participate in the development of suitable instream flow methodologies.

Disposition

The comments were referred to the proponent for reply. Copies of proponent's responses were sent to the public registries, with a copy forwarded to Fisheries and Oceans Canada for their information and additional comment, if necessary.

. . /5

- 5 -

DISPOSITION OF PUBLIC HEARING REQUESTS:

On July 9, 1999, the Director informed all the parties who had requested a public hearing on the Proposal that he had decided not to recommend to the Minister that he cause the Clean Environment Commission to hold a public hearing, for the following reasons:

- 1) Specific river impacts are uncertain due to insufficient river information; a public hearing will not resolve this issue. The river monitoring program is now underway;
- 2) The City of Brandon is required to monitor the river to determine specific impacts and to take appropriate mitigation as required;
- 3) Approval of only a one shift operation will be given at this time;
- 4) River water is treated at Portage la Prairie prior to distribution for potable use;

5) Issues of disease control and worker protection are addressed by other departments;
and

6) The staged licencing process is allowed pursuant to The Manitoba Environment Act.

The Minister received four appeals respecting the Director's decision not to recommend to the Minister that he cause the Clean Environment Commission to hold a public hearing on the Proposal. Upon the Minister's consideration of each appeal, the Minister notified each appellant on August 10, 1999, advising them that their appeal has been dismissed on the grounds that the Director's reasons for his decision were justifiable.

RECOMMENDATION:

A draft Stage 2 Commissioning and Operating Licence is enclosed for the Director's consideration. The draft Licence restricts Maple Leaf Meats Inc. from initiating a 2-shift operation of the hog processing plant until the adjacent off-site wastewater treatment facility is upgraded and licenced to accept the wastewater and pollutant loadings from a 2-shift operation of the hog processing plant. It is recommended that the Licence, if approved, be assigned to the Park-West Region for surveillance and monitoring, ongoing compliance evaluation and enforcement responsibilities.

PREPARED BY:

C. Moche, P. Eng.
Municipal and Industrial Approvals
August 12, 1999

Telephone: (204) 945-7013
Fax: (204) 945-5229
E-mail Address: cmoche@gov.mb.ca