



Concerned Residents Coalition

Media Release

CRC Community Meeting Draws Large Crowd and Support

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2015, Rockwood...The Concerned Residents Coalition (www.hiddenquarry.ca) held its fourth Community Meeting last Thursday, February 27 at the Eden Mills Community Hall. The standing-room crowd came from miles around the proposed Hidden Quarry site filling the Hall with energy and concern about the prospect of this mining industry moving into an agricultural, residential and environmentally sensitive area.

CRC Board Co-Chair Alex Kanarek opened the meeting, underlining the fact that within the next several months a decision will be made by the Ministry of Natural Resources about approving a licence to James Dick Construction Limited to mine aggregate at the proposed Hidden Quarry site. This decision will be contingent, to a large extent, on Guelph Eramosa Township Council's decision on re-zoning the land from agricultural to industrial extractive, as well as on any other outstanding objections. Faced with objections, there is little doubt that the case would be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Dr. Kanarek told the crowd: "What will help to ensure that the Township makes the right decision - the rejection of the rezoning application - is a very strong indication from our whole community that we have far too much to lose if this quarry goes ahead. And what may concern the aggregate company is a similar, strong statement from our community that we stand together in opposition to the quarry and that we will ensure that GET Council is not going to fold like a cheap tent when the OMB hearings begin."

The meeting reviewed the many concerns of residents, and the steps the CRC has taken over the past two years to bring issues, ranging from potential impacts on the environment, water and air to haul routes and economic impact, to GET Council as well as representatives of all other governments and agencies with a stake in this decision.

Four residents also spoke, giving their reasons for their commitment to the CRC which now has supporters numbering more than 750. A fifth resident, Otto Felber, also made a recorded presentation, encouraging residents to contribute to the CRC.

In a short video presentation, "You Will Make the Difference", attendees were given a bird's eye view of the proposed quarry site surrounded by farmland, with commentary from Acton resident and owner of a Touch of Class, Rob Charette, who grew up in Acton with quarry rock flying into his backyard, and from mining engineer Bill Hill, a 43-year resident of 6th Line Eramosa, describing the long term threats to homes and foundations from blasting.

Most sobering was new information shared by former GET Councillor John Scott, the newest member of the CRC Board. "CRC has learned through investigation of public documents that the property adjacent to the proposed site, just across 6th Line Eramosa, is now owned by a company named Markham Hills Farms Ltd. We have also learned that the principals of Markham Hills Farms have had close links to JDCL. There are other potential aggregate sites in the area that are owned by aggregate companies. One in particular is on Eramosa Erin Townline north of Crewson's Corners, previously owned by Mulmur Aggregates and sold in 2006 for \$2 to a numbered company."

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Scott concluded, "This leaves little doubt in our minds that if the Hidden Quarry site is rezoned, then a rezoning application for aggregate extraction will follow sooner or later for these and other properties. Whether developed by JDCL or other aggregate companies, quarries and pits will soon be tapping into the rock that runs under much of this part of Guelph Eramosa Township and Milton/Halton."

Immediately after the presentations, Rockwood resident, Jacob Jagt, **challenged local businesses to match his company, DC Construction's \$500 donation to CRC.** Board member Quentin Johnson had just described CRC's funding needs if it must appear at an OMB hearing – giving a four-year goal of \$600,000. The organization has raised more than \$55,000 so far.

Jagt said "Rockwood and its neighbouring towns and villages is about people and community not about gravel and trucks. The growth of our community relies on the people living there and future families wanting to join our community. It's about the youth living in our community wanting to stay and raise families here, not about filling one man's pockets. On behalf of DC Construction, we are glad to be part of this grass roots movement."

During the question period at the end of the meeting, a strong statement of support and encouragement was made by Mayor Rick Bonnette of Halton Hills, where objections to the proposal are still on the table, especially because of concerns about the haul route which would add 26 gravel trucks an hour to already heavy truck traffic in Acton. Milton Councillor Cindy Lunau also expressed her support for the work of the CRC, citing the success of the Milton residents group FORCE in defeating the St. Mary's pit/quarry proposal south of the 401.

While no members of Guelph Eramosa Township Council were present, a CRC delegation will be made to Council on Monday, March 2 on the subject of the potential for multiple quarry applications in the Township. CRC will also make a delegation to Halton Hills Council on Tuesday, March 3.

Media Contact: Linda Sword lsword@explornet.ca 519-853-1896

Attached photo: Enthusiastic audience at CRC Community Meeting (higher definition photo available on request.)