



Concerned Residents Coalition

The "Hidden Quarry" Exposed

Presentation from Concerned Residents Coalition

To Guelph Eramosa Township Council

October 7, 2013

By Witold and Natalie Jaroszewski, W & T Mushrooms Ltd.

This text will be accompanied by a Powerpoint Presentation. (If you would like a copy of the PowerPoint, please contact Linda Sword.)

Good Evening Mr. Mayor and members of council. Thank you for allowing my father and me to speak on behalf of our family and CRC.

We would like to thank you for visiting our farm which is located at 4949 Eramosa 6th Line, just 100 metres north of the proposed Hidden Quarry site.

Perhaps you have a better understanding in what goes into our operation, and perhaps understand the stress we are under regarding the "Hidden Quarry."

If you haven't had a chance to visit, our invitation is still open.

My father, Witold Jaroszewski, an electronic engineer, escaped communist Poland in 1981. He spent 18 months in a rigorous refugee camp in Austria, in which he received Political Asylum. He immigrated to Canada in November of 1982, landing in Montreal, Quebec then moving to Toronto, Ontario in 1983. In mid-1984 he purchased land in Rockwood, Ontario where he began to build his mushroom farm.

Starting with 2 pitchforks and a wheelbarrow, our family began producing White Mushrooms. Through the years new technology was introduced into the growing rooms, upgrading to a European technology and method in production. W&T became modernized and computerized. The computers shown here control the atmosphere in the growing rooms; measuring, for example, RH, CO2 and temperature among other factors crucial to the growing process.

In 2007, W&T Mushroom LTD switched to Exotic Mushrooms such as Oyster & Shitake Mushrooms.

We have invented and developed our own recipe for the growing medium, using ingredients from local farmers.

Our technique will enable W&T Mushroom LTD to expand into the production of: Maitake, Enoki, and King Oyster Mushrooms.

Did you know??

Oyster Mushrooms: It is important to say that our mushrooms are pesticide- and chemical-free. We are in the process of applying for "organic certification."

- Control hypertension, obesity and diabetes;
- Kill cancer cells;
- Help prevent hyperacidity and constipation;
- Lower cholesterol levels;
- Strengthen immune systems.

The oyster mushroom is also being studied as a possible defense against HIV. Due to their high anti-oxidant compounds, these mushrooms can be a lifesaving ingredient.

The first growing stage is the formation of the oyster mushroom, the pinning stage - You might call it the "nursery." The incubation process has a strict environment which must be maintained up to 72 hours. During this time there must be no possibility of contamination. Should there be any contamination, deformation, dead pins and/or bacteria will occur.

We produce many unique colours of mushroom such as: Yellow, brown, silver, blue, white and pink.

We have established ourselves to be the largest consistent, all season, operational oyster mushroom growing facility in Ontario.

We sterilize the growth materials in a large autoclave.

We use a sterile "cleanroom" where we close the bags of growing materials we call logs. Here we have installed a sophisticated air filtering system.

In our facility there are also six 2000-square foot growing rooms. We grow 2270 kilos of mushrooms a week, and 120,000 a year.

For the past 16 years W&T Mushroom has been a vendor at the St. Lawrence Market. We are passionate about our product from start to finish. We pride ourselves on providing the public with great and healthy produce. It is a pleasure when a customer or gourmet restaurant chef comes back and says "your mushrooms are the best mushrooms."

It is a privilege to educate our customers about our product. If a customer is only comfortable with the `regular` mushroom we are able to explain the benefits of different types.

When they decide to try a new kind and bring back fantastic reviews the next week, we feel like we have really accomplished something. There are thousands of varieties to choose from. Expand your horizons and try something new today!

Let me list our major concerns:

Dust-

Dust is the most risky, in fact inevitable impact of quarrying where mushroom production is concerned.

How?

Dust will be created by excavating, blasting, drilling, loading and moving of trucks.

When the dust disperses into the air it is able to travel long distances, never mind the 100 metres from the proposed site to our farm. Even small quantities can affect our crop. Dust particles large and small easily pick up and carry bacteria and moulds, which are death to mushrooms.

Water Supply-

When blasting occurs the water will also be affected. We use water at all stages of our production; - making mushroom incubation bags, heating, sterilizing, steaming and cleaning among other things. A mushroom is more than 80% water.

Water Contamination-

The quality of our water can be affected by an accidental spill into the aquifer. Should the 'contaminated water' flow into our facility it could destroy our crop, making it unsuitable for consumption.

Property Value

Our property is our home and our livelihood. It is evident that once a quarry opens for business the value of our property will go down. But that is not all. Our business, our future, 30 years and millions of dollars of investment will simply go up in dust.

Shock waves impact at 100 meters

The impact that shock waves will have on our building is tremendous. A crack in the foundation might be a relatively minor impact, but if a pipe should break and water pour over the computers that control the growing rooms or if any of the electronic equipment which controls the details of our growing environment was shaken and shattered, the entire operation could also be lost.

The "What-if?" Factor

What if one of our concerns actually materializes? Who will be liable and take responsibility for ...?

- Structural damages to the mushroom facility?
- Equipment loss and damage?
- Product contamination and loss by dust and/or water?
- Shortages of water?

We would just like to take a moment and refresh your memories of the Public Meeting held on March 25th 2013 at Rockmosa. Mr. Greg Sweetnam, representing James Dick Construction Limited summarized what he saw as the future impact of the proposed Hidden Quarry on our community.

We would ask you to reflect on our presentation today and perhaps form a revised opinion regarding his assertions:

- That property values will go UP in this area
- That this community will benefit from JDCL's presence
- That JDCL will be an excellent neighbour
- That JDCL will have a positive effect on the environment
- That JDCL will leave the area better than we found it

Any business or agri-business close to this quarry will have the same concerns and potential problems that we face.

The proposed Hidden Quarry has already put many of our business plans on hold:

Our business plan was to expand our facility and to double production over the next several years. We have had to stop in our tracks, our momentum is lost. With the threat of a quarry next door we cannot invest in growing this business.

We are in the process of becoming certified through the HACCP – that is the Hazardous Analysis Critical Control Points program overseen by the federal Food Inspection Agency. Such certification would be impossible with a quarry nearby. In fact, in order to grow mushrooms near a quarry we would have to invest literally millions of dollars simply to upgrade to the level required by this certification.

In 1984, we purchased a dilapidated mushroom farm in an agricultural area. We have built it into a modern, technologically advanced operation. Is it right that an aggregate company should prosper here at the expense of farmers like us who have invested their dreams, money and lives in Canadian food production?

I would like to share a story that I hold very dear to my heart. When I was a little girl going to elementary school I decided to interview my dad for some kind of school project. I remember to this day one of my questions.

“Dad, why do you like growing mushrooms? What do you get out of the experience knowing you work literally 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year?”

He told me: “Natalie I get excited when I see mushrooms growing, when life begins to form from scratch. I treat every mushroom as a child; I care for it up until it is delivered to our customer. I say to myself ‘I did that!’ All those hours of caring for the mushroom has paid off. I get more excited from customers who tell me ‘Your mushrooms are fantastic!’”

Personally, I now completely understand my father's perspective. I treat my mushrooms like children too. I feel like a child on Christmas morning when I see my mushrooms growing!

We are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your attention.