



PHOTOS  
VIDEOS  
TV LISTINGS  
HOT TOPICS

SUN, MAR 01, 2015 | -1 °C

Overcast

Full Text Archive

What can we find for you?

Guelph

Search News  
 Search Entire Site

search

HOME NEWS BUSINESS SPORTS WHAT'S ON OPINION COMMUNITY LIVING OBITUARIES CLASSIFIEDS

Home > News > Local > Municipal board fight seems certain over Hidden...

Like 1 Tweet 5 +1 0 SHARE

Feb 24, 2015 | Vote 0 0

# Municipal board fight seems certain over Hidden Quarry east of Guelph

Guelph Mercury  
By Rob O'Flanagan

GUELPH—Opponents of a proposed quarry in the Rockwood area are gearing up for a costly fight in 2015. And the company that wants to reopen the so-called Hidden Quarry believes an Ontario Municipal Board hearing is imminent.

Linda Sword, communications co-ordinator for the Concerned Residents Coalition, said the group opposes the James Dick Construction development at Highway 7 and Sideroad 6, east of Rockwood, and is raising money to fight it at the municipal board. The plan involves a 39-hectare, or 100-acre property.

The group sees the proposal as a threat to valuable farmland and drinking water sources.

Sword said the group anticipates 2015 will be decision time on the proposed aggregate site. And if the decision doesn't go the way James Dick Construction hopes, a municipal board challenge is likely.

Company vice-president Greg Sweetnam said such a challenge is all but assured, given that there are 39 residential objectors to the project, as well as three municipalities—Milton, the Town of Halton Hills and the Region of Halton.

"If there is even one objector in Ontario it will actually go to the Ontario Municipal Board to be resolved," he said. "Basically what's teeing up here is this file is going to the Ontario Municipal Board for adjudication, and that will take place probably some time in 2015, 2016."

Sweetnam said the company recently finalized the Aggregate Resources Act process for Hidden Quarry, receiving sign-offs from all involved provincial ministries. The Grand River Conservation Authority and Wellington County have also signed off on the process, he said.

"The vast majority of the technical peer reviews that have been done have been basically resolved in favour of approval of the quarry," he said.

Unless the objections are dropped the matter will definitely go to the municipal board, he indicated.

A community meeting put on by the concerned residents is scheduled for Thursday at the Eden Mills community hall, beginning at 7 p.m. Its purpose is to discuss the latest developments, Sword said. More than 120 people are expected.



MOST

calls



IN YO



Sword said 750 people and counting have signed up for the group's updates, and \$50,000 has been raised for the group's work since spring 2013, when it was formed. The money came from donations, a dance, garage sale, golf tournament, and membership fees, she said.

Much more money will have to be raised if the matter goes to the municipal board, Sword said.

James Dick Construction, also the operator of the contentious Dolime quarry on the western edge of Guelph, has applied to the ministry for a licence to take up to 700,000 tonnes a year of sand, gravel and stone out of Hidden Quarry, a dormant historic quarry site.

The company is also seeking rezoning of the property from agricultural and hazard land to extractive industrial, according to the wording of the application.

"If Guelph-Eramosa decides that they will not rezone to industrial, this will no doubt be taken to the OMB by James Dick," Sword said. "And if Guelph-Eramosa decides to rezone so that they can mine aggregate there, then the Concerned Residents have to decide whether they can, themselves, take Guelph-Eramosa Township council to the OMB, because we disagree with their decision on the zoning."

Thursday night's meeting will also serve to "rally the troops," Sword added. "We have to start very, very serious fundraising."

She added that the group is prepared to partner with Guelph-Eramosa Township in the event the township denies the rezoning application and is challenged at the municipal board.

Two studies related to the proposal—an economic impact study and an aggregate haul route study—are expected in late spring. Once those are received the township and ministry can move forward with decisions, Sword said.

"We're pretty confident that in the next six months decisions are going to be made," she said. "In the next six months we need to be very visible. Guelph-Eramosa elected officials are going to be making decisions that affect all of us in the community and so we need them to know how much we are concerned. The whole council needs to feel that this really matters to a large number of people."

Sweetnam said his company is very optimistic the project will clear the challenges. He does not believe there are any valid objectives to it.

"The (residents' group) has made a decision early on in the process to oppose this application, and we haven't been able to get traction even though we've demonstrated that the application meets the standard of the peer reviewers and the experts are satisfied," he said. "We haven't been able to satisfy this core group of residents. Their opinions haven't changed at all during the whole process."

The subject of aggregate extraction will be the focus of a panel discussion Saturday in Guelph. "Extracting the Future: Aggregate Mining in Southern Ontario" will involve four panelists discussing the challenges quarries pose to human, animal and environmental stability. The event, sponsored by the Ontario Public Interest Research Group and The Peak magazine, is from 12:30 to 3 p.m. at Silence, 46 Essex St. Admission is free.

[roflanagan@guelphmercury.com](mailto:roflanagan@guelphmercury.com)

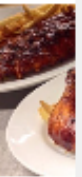


neighb  
how nic



SPONS

TOP



50%  
Dinir  
Joe's

Vi