

The ROCKWOOD Miller

Township replaces planning consultant on Rockwood quarry application file

Concerned with lack of Information flow, GET hires a new consultant to handle Hidden Quarry application: Citizens hopeful

Less than an hour after a citizens group complained of being left out of the information loop in connection with a controversial quarry application between Acton and Rockwood, Guelph/Eramosa Township Council, concerned with the flow of information from its consultant, met behind closed doors and voted to hire a new consultant on the file.

Elizabeth Howson with MSH (Macaulay Shiomi Howson) Planning will replace Cuesta Planning Consultants, to act on behalf of the Township in processing a rezoning application by James Dick Construction Ltd., for a quarry on Highway 7 at the Sixth Line. The company also requires a provincial aggregate license.

Mayor Chris White said they decided to switch planning consultants because they weren't getting reports in "a timely manner" from Cuesta in response to the many issues raised so date about the application for the so-called Hidden Quarry.

"The quality of the work was fine, but we weren't necessarily getting the stuff we wanted, when we wanted it," White said on Monday, adding there was an "overall sense we weren't getting a timely response."

White said the change in planning consultant will not set the planning process back because the Township has yet to receive two or three of the major reports for review.

At last Monday's council meeting, members of the Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC) detailed concerns that the people doing a peer review of reports on the application are "doing their job" and not just "going through the motions" during a thorough review of the quarry application.

CRC member Dan Kennaley said the group is frustrated at not being privy to information between the Township's peer review consultants and the applicant. "Without this information, we're left in the dark as to whether the concerns of the peer re-

view consultant are being resolved, and we have no way of potentially challenging this subsequent information..." Kennaley said, asking that all information associated with the application be made available to the CRC.

The CRC is also frustrated that it does not know what has happened with the many issues raised by the group during the past year, including peer reviews of cultural impact and visual impact studies, blasting and hydro geological impacts. It also wants GET to assess the economic impact of the quarry on adjacent properties, and hire a peer review specialist.

CRC member Natalie Jaroszewski, whose family owns a mushroom farm near the proposed quarry, repeated a question she first asked last fall about who would be responsible if the quarry is approved and it adversely impacts her family's business. "...I believe the Township should require a



SUSTAINABLE SUPPORT: On Monday, members of the Concerned Citizens Coalition (CRC) gratefully accepted a \$500 cheque from Mike Foley (left) of Waste Wise of Georgetown, to use in its efforts to fight plans for a quarry on Highway 7, between Rockwood and Acton. - Frances Learment photo

third-party bond from the proponent to protect the Township."

Mayor Chris White promised the Township would follow up on the group's questions and concerns, adding the Township is "not unaware of the gaps - we see there are some lingering questions" about the application. He noted the CRC might not like some of the answers to be provided. "This won't go on forever. We will reach a point when this (final) report has to show up and we have to make decisions..." Mayor White said, adding he recognized the group's "angst" about

delays in getting answers to their concerns and questions.

The Township's new CAO Kim Wingrove said the planning process for the quarry application continues to move forward, and that she spent the last month compiling a detailed data base of all of the various information received to date to ensure a thorough analysis is done.

Rockwood Councillor Doug Breen, who said they need to get all of the information and have "every duck lined up" because he knows the issue will end up at the Ontario Municipal Board for a de-

cision.

The CRC, which earlier raised concerns that Cuesta Planning had shown a "predisposition toward approving the proposed Hidden Quarry" said it hoped the hiring of a new consultant would signal complete and timely sharing of information on the many and serious potential impacts of the proposed quarry so the CRC can promote a thorough and fair assessment of the proposal.

Mayor White estimated Cuesta had been paid \$30,000 to \$40,000 for work done to date - costs which will be covered by the proponent.

I'm gonna be a Fireman someday.



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