

The ROCKWOOD Miller



Can Township demand expanded water monitoring by Hidden Quarry proponent?

Residents question quarry impact on well/ground water quality and quantity

Township councillors agree with the Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC) about the critical need for additional well monitoring in connection with James Dick Construction Ltd.'s (JDCL) application for a quarry on the north/east corner of Highway 7 and Sixth Line, between Rockwood and Acton. Now, they will find out if they can get it.

At Council on Monday, CRC members said developing baseline data is needed to gauge cause and effect of the quarry on ground and well water quality and quantity. There are 20 private wells within 500-metres of the proposed quarry, and approximately 25 wells located between 500 and 1,000-metres of the site.

One of them belongs to Stephanie De Grandis, a

CRC Scientific Review Committee chief who said its critical "our wells are safe and the water is drinkable." She said they need to begin to establish true baseline water/pump levels, and monitoring should be done for two years in advance of any quarrying. "We all assume JDCL will assume the cost so they will be paying for all this well testing..." De Grandis said, adding, "it is a major concern."

Seventh Line resident, CRC member Mike Venhuis, a hydrogeologist, said Dick's proposal to monitor one year prior to bedrock extraction is "too late" and additional wells in a larger area, including south of Highway 7, should be monitored.

Venhuis said numbers and computer modelling used by the applicant's

expert to determine the drawdown of water on wells are "flawed." "We'd like to have additional testing done to establish a good base line," he said, adding there should be third-party verification of all monitoring results.

Mayor Chris White said the CRC's request "seems to make sense" and now the Township will determine how to proceed to make it happen. "Do we have authority to demand this, is it something that comes through the MoE (Ministry of Environment)...?" White asked, adding "this (water) is one of the main impacts you're going to see with something like this (application)."

White told CRC members the Township would respond to its requests as quickly as possible.