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## THIS WEEK

Ryan Laird puts anti-bullying message to music, A&E: Hills of Erin Studio Tour celebrates 25 years, Events, Rural Life, Seniors, County Page, Sports

## Breen: Quarry proposal is 'invasive'

by Chris Daponte

BRUCEDALE - The Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC) appeared before Guelph-Eramosa council again on Monday night to reiterate their concerns with the proposed "hidden quarry" southwest of Rockwood.

James Dick Construction is seeking an aggregate licence from the MNR as well as a zoning amendment from Guelph-Eramosa Township that will allow the company to proceed with the proposed pit, which is expected to produce about 700,000 tonnes annually of sand, gravel and dolostone.

The quarry would cover about 25 hectares (61 acres) of the 39 hectare (100 acre) James Dick property at the northeast corner of 6th Line and Highway 7.

But CRC member Stephanie De Grandis, who owns a farm next to the site, said there are too many questions surrounding the underwater blasting process the proponent plans to use to mine the aggregate on the site.

"This is uncharted territory for Canada and it's uncharted territory for our township," De Grandis told council.

She pointed out the fractured and porous rock in the local aquifer and said underwater mining "will cause permanent damage to the aqua-structures in that area."

In addition to groundwater quality and quantity, De Grandis said other CRC concerns about the proposal include:

- possible damage to nearby homes from shock waves and flying debris;
- destruction of local wetlands;
- dust and air quality;
- decrease in local property values;
- destruction of wildlife habitat;
- haulage and traffic increases;
- visual impact; and
- the loss of cultural heritage.

A visual impact study recently filed by James Dick Construction and available on the township website concludes that the proposed quarry will be "well hidden from view from surrounding properties and from nearby residences ...

"It is also hidden from the industrial lands to the east and to the south. There are no views into the operation from the surrounding provincial Highway 7 or the township concession roads."

Councillor Doug Breen suggested James Dick Construction has an uphill battle when it comes to receiving township approval for the proposed quarry.



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"I can't think of anything that's not here," said Breen of all the possible concerns with the proposal, including below-the-water-table extraction and underwater blasting.

"You could not make this any more invasive than it is ... You'd be hard-pressed to make it any more difficult than it is."

Council unanimously passed a resolution stating it would pass on the CRC's list of concerns to officials from township planning consultant Cuesta Planning and James Dick Construction (councillor John Scott was absent).

James Dick Construction VP Greg Sweetnam did not return a call by press time.

August 16, 2013

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