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Company proposing below-water-table extraction at quarry is in for 'a long fight'

by Chris Daponte

BRUCEDALE - Guelph-Eramosa councillors say James Dick Construction officials should expect a full house of less-than-pleased residents for a March 25 public meeting on a local quarry proposed by the company.

"There's going to be absolutely zero appetite for going below the water table," councillor Doug Breen said on Monday night.

"It's going to be a long, long fight."

James Dick Construction is seeking a zoning bylaw amendment to pave the way for a quarry on a 100 acre (39 hectare) property at the northeast corner of 6th Line and Highway 7, east of Rockwood.

Township planning advisor Mike Davis, of Cuesta Planning Consultants, told council the company plans to extract about two million tonnes (700,000 annually) of sand, gravel and dolostone at the site.

He said extraction will take place on about 61 acres (25 hectares) of the property, with extraction reaching depths of 30 metres below the water table and upwards of 50m in total.

Breen said township residents will likely not be happy with plans for the quarry, and particularly the proposal to extract below the water table.

"To my knowledge we've never gone below the water table in this area because the bedrock is so fractious," Breen said.

He later added, "If there was ever an area in the province where you don't have to go below the water table for limestone, this is it."

Councillor David Wolk asked what kind of financial benefit such a quarry could provide for the township, if any.

Breen replied in the past the township has received tax revenue, a new road, and a small fee for each tonne extracted.

But, "It won't even pay our phone bill for the complaints we're going to get," he added.

Mayor Chris White agreed residents will not be happy with the proposal.

Acknowledging quarry applications are contentious, Davis said the James Dick proposal does present some concerns - including traffic, water quality and quantity, and protection for the natural environment - but he recommends moving forward with a public meeting.

Council voted unanimously in favour of hosting a public meeting on the application on

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Council voted unanimously in favour of holding a public meeting on the application on March 25 at 7pm at the Rockmosa hall in Rockwood.

February 8, 2013

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