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Group says further study required to properly assess quarry application

by Chris Daponte

BRUCEDALE - A group of concerned residents living near a proposed quarry southeast of Rockwood says more studies are required before authorities can properly assess the application.

On May 6 Dan Kennaley, on behalf of the Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC), asked Guelph-Eramosa council to require James Dick Construction to complete a cultural heritage study and a visual impact study as part of its zoning bylaw amendment application.

The company is seeking the amendment, as well as a licence from the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), in order extract two million tonnes (700,000 annually) of sand, gravel and dolostone on a 39 hectare (100 acre) property at the northeast corner of 6th Line and Highway 7.

"We believe that in order for the proposed quarry application to be properly evaluated the applicant ... address built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscape resources whereas, thus far the applicant has only studied archaeological resources," Kennaley said in his presentation to council.

"The applicant must also undertake a study of visual impact, which he has not done to date."

Kennaley cited several sections of the Wellington County official plan and the Provincial Policy Statement, which he said indicate the two studies should be completed.

He also mentioned the 2010 Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) decision regarding James Dick's Rockfort quarry application in Caledon, noting the OMB "refused the Rockfort Quarry in part because negative visual impacts and negative cultural heritage impacts."

Consultant questioned

Kennaley then criticized the township's own advisor, Cuesta Planning Consultants, stating the company seemed predisposed to approval of the quarry application and citing several quotes from the planning consultant in various reports to council.

Mike Davis, of Cuesta Planning Consultants, said the only thing his company has recommended to date was proceeding with a public meeting, which happened in March.

"Certainly there's not predisposition to this application on our part," Davis said.

In fact, he agreed there are "deficiencies" in the James Dick application when it comes to possible cultural heritage impacts.

Councillor Doug Breen asked if the CRC was expecting to find something specific on the quarry site through a cultural heritage study. Kennaley said no; the group was more



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concerned about the area surrounding the site.

When it comes to a visual impact study, Davis said unlike the situation in Caledon, Guelph-Eramosa has no "policy basis" on which to issue such a request. He explained that based on the county official plan, James Dick Construction just has to show it will "try to minimize the visual impact" of the operation.

Mayor Chris White said just because there is no specific requirement for a visual impact study it does not mean the township is going to ignore the issue.

Breen agreed, saying if the township asks for something and James Dick refuses, it will look bad on the company.

"We have absolutely no issue with asking for more information," Breen said.

White concluded by saying the township would gather as much information as possible before making any decision.

"We've got a bit of a road ahead of us," he said.

James Dick Construction vice president Greg Sweetnam did not return a call from the Advertiser by press time.

May 17, 2013

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