



Concerned Residents Coalition

Working to Protect Your Community and Environment

Media Release

April 28, 2017

GRCA Revisits Hidden Quarry Application; Recommends Deferral

Rockwood...The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) Board of Directors received a new staff report on the proposed Hidden Quarry this morning. The report recommends deferral of consideration of the Hidden Quarry application until the proponent, James Dick Construction Ltd. (JDCL), has completed the hydrogeological studies required to assess the potential impacts of the proposed quarry.

The new review was made in the context of JDCL's second application to Guelph Eramosa Township (GET) for re-zoning, and its first application to Wellington County for an Official Plan amendment.

The GRCA recommendations were distributed to GET and Wellington County who are considering JDCL's application now, and the Ontario Ministries of Natural Resources/Forestry and Environment/Climate Change who reviewed the company's aggregate licence application submitted in 2012.

GRCA staff will review the new, more complete studies, when submitted by JDCL, and determine if the additional information indicates a need to re-evaluate the application and potential impacts of the proposed quarry. The GRCA Board agreed that staff would present the updated review for the Board's information.

The GRCA has changed its stance vis-à-vis the evaluation of the Hidden Quarry proposal since its July 2014 letter to GET in which it stated that it had no objections to the development of a quarry 23 metres below the water table in the Paris Galt Moraine. In its current review, GRCA considered studies undertaken since 2014, several of them developed by consultants working on behalf of the Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC), a community group with supporters in both Wellington County and Halton Region.

The April 28, 2017 staff report to the GRCA Board states: "Based on the review of new information included in the technical reports with these new applications [for re-zoning], staff have several questions concerning the assumptions made in the [JDCL] consultant's modelling that require a revised groundwater analysis." The report (attached) recommends that the applicant revise the hydrogeological model through a series of concrete steps before the application can be properly assessed.

While it is not yet known whether JDCL will act on these recommendations, it is clear that such work would require at least two years, and would likely delay any appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board.

Currently, the JDCL application for a licence under the Aggregate Resources Act is on hold at the OMB pending decisions on the new re-zoning and Official Plan amendment applications which were required when the Hearing was adjourned indefinitely last fall. It is not known at this time whether the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry responsible for administration the Act will change its position and re-open the file based on the GRCA recommendation.

CRC has made a serious investment in the scientific analysis of the quarry proposal. The organization now has more than 1200 supporters and hundreds of donors. CRC was a Party to the OMB hearing on the Hidden Quarry which was adjourned last fall due to a legal technicality. Halton Hills, Milton, Halton Region and Guelph Eramosa Township all join CRC in objecting to the application.

The proposed quarry site is just 1000 metres from the growing Town of Rockwood and a new municipal well; it is 50 metres from Provincial Highway 7; it is just kilometres from the already crowded Acton and Georgetown streets which double as Highway 7; it is a designated 'Greenlands' and 'Core Greenlands' in the Official Plan featuring a provincially significant wetland, a tributary of Brydson Creek and almost 100 acres of trees, both old growth woodland and plantation; it is surrounded by wetlands and is upstream from the precious cold water Brydson Creek trout habitat and the Blue Springs Creek Area of National Scientific Interest.

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