

NEWS

HALTON HILLS VOWS TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT NEW QUARRY NEAR TOWN BORDER

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The Town of Halton Hills reinforced its opposition to a proposed quarry in a neighbouring municipality at Monday's council meeting (March 25).

James Dick Construction Limited (JDCL) filed an application to operate Hidden Quarry on the north-east corner of Highway 7 and Sixth Line in the Township of Guelph/Eramosa - approximately 2.5 kilometres from the Halton Hills border. It is appealing to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (formerly the OMB) to have its proposal approved, and has a hearing set for May 21.

Halton Hills' opposition to the quarry is based largely on the increase of truck traffic that

the quarry would create in town, and concerns of how the quarry would impact the supply of ground and surface water in the area.

"The main thing we have to remember in Halton Hills is this will be anywhere from 48 to 50 trucks per hour, Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 6 at night," said Mayor Rick Bonnette.

Acton Coun. Jon Hurst said truck traffic is already a major concern, and he worries that more trucks will not only have a negative impact on downtown businesses, but also create safety issues for children and elderly residents.

"The biggest complaint I get on a regular basis is the existing truck traffic in downtown Acton - with the tight turns at the

downtown intersection, the narrow lanes along Mill Street, the noise, truck emissions, aggressive driving."

JDCL's application calls for a quarry on a 39.4-hectare property, with 24.8 hectares being used to extract 12 million tonnes of aggregate; there would be a minimum of 700,000 tonnes extracted each year.

Several councillors stressed that the town is not simply anti-quarry, noting that Dufferin Aggregates has operated a quarry in town for years and has contributed to the local economy.

"Dufferin has continually and willingly worked with the Town of Halton Hills to address concerns and issues over the years," Hurst said. "One notable accomplishment through discussion and compromise was the establishment of a truck route that reduced negative impacts on town traffic and infrastructure."

Coun. Bryan Lewis said he was informed by people in the industry that demand for aggregate is low, leading him to question whether another quarry is needed.

"Part of the frustration here is as much as we're aware of what's going on, this is not a case of us trying to gang up on anybody," he said. "We're just trying to be part of the process."

Council heard a presentation from Doug Tripp of the Concerned Residents Coalition. Since JDCL filed its application in 2012, the group has spent \$700,000 fighting the quarry, all paid for through public fundraising efforts. It has hired hydrogeologists to study groundwater, used ground penetrating radar to study the land and water around the quarry, and had studies done on the effects on species at risk in the area.

"I want to applaud the members of the CRC after so many years of your continued and spirited opposition to this proposed quarry," Hurst said. "Your insistence on facts and the use of various experts related to the various issues is the way to express opposition."

At the conclusion of the meeting, the town passed a resolution calling on the province to require applicants to demonstrate the need for aggregate before opening new quarries.

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