

The ROCKWOOD Miller



Two Mayors and a half-dozen councillors turn out for CRC Community Meeting

By: Vivien Fleisher

Before introducing Milton Councillor Kristina Tesser-Derkson at a community meeting last week in Eden Mills, Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC) president Doug Tripp asked the audience if anyone knew how long they'd been in the battle against James Dick's (JDCL) Hidden Quarry proposal. Without skipping a beat, someone shouted "six and a half years", leading to a bit of reflection on a journey where OMB hearings had to be rescheduled, and are now less than two months away. Tripp said support for CRC has not wavered, evident in the front row where Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette, Guelph/Eramosa Mayor Chris White, and Councillor Tesser-Derkson sat.

All three spoke at length about the various impacts the proposed category-2 quarry will have on each community. Tesser-Derkson has her hands full in Milton in light of JDCL's application to extract at the Reid Quarry, and said the town has been united with CRC from the start as both face serious threats to their drinking water if blasting is allowed, and how impressed she was by CRC's stamina after six years, ability to fundraise, and that they inspired the group fighting the Reid quarry to come out to the meeting.

Next up, Mayor Bonnette spoke, thanking councillors Mike Albano, Jon Hurst and Ted Brown for also joining him. "I can't say enough about the CRC," he said. In a week that saw them present at a council meeting, endure a four and a half hour Regional meeting, and get up early Friday morning to bear witness to a secret aggregate summit in Caledon attended by Natural Resources Minister John Yakabuski. Recalling his words in the same room five years ago, Bonnette described their upcoming



Brookville student and activist Rand Peter is interviewed by reporter Susan Johnson at the CRC community meeting last Thursday in Eden Mills.

battle as a "marathon, not a sprint." Now, with seven weeks to go, "we're into the sprint." And it's only possible because of CRC's dedication. Bonnette said the Provincial policy statement on aggregate is a huge problem for municipalities; in April 2013 the province took away "the need to show need", and it's this aspect that dogs a proper evaluation of this quarry in environmental and safety terms. He cited the fact that Dufferin quarry south of Acton has shifted operations because of the decline in need for aggregate. He also praised Dufferin for being excellent corporate neighbors, in contrast to JDCL whose total lack of presence in the community led directly to the scuttled OMB hearings in 2016.

Next up: Mayor Chris White thanked Councillors Bruce Dickieson and Mark Bouwmeester for attending. White acknowledged the steep learning curve the whole journey has been, and the burden on small municipalities as not just unfair, but virtually impossible to fight with limited resources. White said, "this is not good for our community" and despite the ups and downs vis a vis the town's position, he assured the group he was "not just blowing smoke."

George Minakakis, chair of the group "ACTION" fighting the Reid quarry, was even more pointed in his comments. He runs companies globally but said he'd never seen this before: this kind of

unfair process he'd witnessed in China and third world countries doesn't happen in Canada, and after expressing that in Milton Council, gained their support. He said every competitor has a weakness: JDCL is not infallible.

A special guest, grade five Brookville student and quarry activist Rand Peter was "interviewed" by Susan Johnson, underscoring the kind of attention this issue has garnered and providing inspiration to anyone who doesn't think people can make a difference.

WORD IN THE VILLAGE



with Vivien Fleisher



Lisa Gilchrist: "It's dumb. It's a waste of money and time. You know how many license plates there are that they'd have to change? It's ridiculous."



Erin Clarke: "I really don't care. I'm indifferent, but it's probably a waste of time and money. 'Yours to Discover' was fine. That's what all the commercials are."

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