

## St Mary's quarry stopped by Province...

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Flamborough Councillor Margaret McCarthy led the charge against the quarry the entire time, creating dozens of objections that turn into unanimous Hamilton council decisions over the six year span harkening back to the March 2004 day that David Lowndes, his father and a company official stopped into her Waterdown constituency office to announce they had been purchasing lots in the area in order to build a quarry. McCarthy told the Compass that she was now thrilled her hard work had seen a fruitful end.

"I'm relieved – I guess that's the best description," she laughed. "I guess it's a combination of relief and the playing that my team just won the Super Bowl."

When Lowndes dropped a puck-shaped piece of compressed granite on her desk that March day, McCarthy knew the proposed quarry would be taking up a lot of her time and energy – but she admitted that even then, she had no idea how much.

At the time, rumours had been circulating that the properties and lots were being bought up for the construction of a golf course. Not long afterwards, McCarthy ruefully noted that a golf course would have been a relief, compared to the idea of a quarry dropping down on the lots.

However, almost instantly, she sent a newsletter out to her constituents, apprising them of the quarry application and at a hastily-organized community meeting at Lawson Trailer Park, she watched as the Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE) was created on the spot with area residents offering their services to fight the quarry as an organized citizens group.

"The notion that people were investing their time and their financial resources to battle this quarry was a big one," she confessed. At its peak, FORCE had a war-chest of \$500,000 to use fighting the application.

Two years after Lowndes submitted his application, his stake was bought out by St Marys, an aggregate industry giant and at that point, the battle looked tougher than ever.

However, both McCarthy and FORCE stuck to their guns and before long, political good will was extending their way.

Aside from motions against the quarry – in several different forms – being passed by Hamilton Council, soon, Milton Council, Burlington Council and Halton Regional Council has drafted motions against the quarry application. Conservation Halton and Conservation Hamilton likewise submitted their disapproval.

But the biggest thorn in St Marys' side coming from the Province itself was a Ministry of the Environment objection filed last summer against the "inconclusive" water testing done by St Mary two summers back.

"When you have everyone pulling from all these communities, I honestly think it would have been politically embarrassing (for the Province) to advance the quarry (application)."

"So I have to say thank you to Milton, Burlington and Halton region for their support and efforts in this battle," she noted. "It could not have been done without them."

Politicians on Halton's side of the border were flush with praise for McCarthy's efforts.

Speaking to the Compass by one of the large "Stop the Quarry signs as he posed for a photo with McCarthy, Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr said: "We're really pleased at all the work that everyone did—"

A passing car on Centre Road, the passenger shouting "Way to go Margaret!" to McCarthy standing nearby, interrupting him.

"That says it all. Obviously, tremendous work—" Carr said, when the next car honked its horn. "Holy smokes."

With the roads temporarily clear, he added: "It does affect everybody right across the boundary into Halton, so we're very pleased and very thankful that the provincial government listened, and it was because of the great work that Margaret and the citizens did."

Milton Councillor Cindy Lunau also heaped praise on McCarthy, who's retiring from politics this October, saying, "This victory will be her legacy. I am so pleased that she can see this before she retires. She brought sparkle and fire to the fight against this quarry."

"This is absolutely good news for Campbellville," she added. Noting that Campbellville's roads were cited as the primary haul route for St Marys' trucks, which would have numbered in the hundreds daily, Lunau noted, "These are country boundary road that were never meant to be the thoroughfare for gravel trucks."

For his part, Graham Flint, chair of FORCE, also praised the local councils for their involvement.

"If we hadn't had the City of Hamilton, Town of Milton, the City of Burlington, the Region of Halton, all saying 'Hey, Province, you need to intervene here,'" he said. "We wouldn't have got to where we got to today."

He also noted the "fabulous" work of his organized citizens group.

"Six years into it, there were still four- to five-hundred people coming out for a meeting if something important was happening. If we needed letters sent in, there's be a thousand letters or e-mails."

When St Marys initiated a 45-day Notification and Consultation period in 2009, the mail-boxes of the quarry company and Ministry of Natural Resources were stuffed with more than 1,200 objection letters.

"Get involved and speak up. I think that was the key to what furthered the process for us," Flint said.

"The most important thing is to do it – actually send in that letter, go to that meeting, sign the list," he continued.

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## Tax Notice

Ratepayers of the Town of Milton are reminded that the second installment of the 2010 Interim Tax bill will be due on Friday, April 30, 2010.

If you require information about taxes, please contact the Corporate Services, Tax Division at 905-878-7252 ext. 2193, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Tax payments must be received in the Cashier's Office on or before the due date to avoid penalty. A late payment charge of 1.25% will be charged on the first day of default and on the first day of each calendar month in which the default continues.

It is the responsibility of the ratepayer to ensure that the taxes are paid by the due date, even in the event that the bill is not received as mailed.

*Payments can be made in the following manner:*

- By mail: Tax Division, 150 Mary St. Milton, ON, L9T 6Z5.
- By phone/internet through most banking institutions (please contact your financial institution for details).
- Between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at Corporate Services, Cashier Services, Town Hall. Payment by cheque, cash or direct debit is available.
- At any bank or financial institution in Ontario.
- By deposit into the After Hours Drop Box, Town Hall.
- Cheques are payable to the Town of Milton.

Please contact the Tax Division for details regarding the Pre-Authorized Tax Payment Program.

**\* There are two After-Hours Drop Boxes, these can be found outside the main doors facing Mary Street and facing King Street.**