

Gravel Watch says no quarry application turned down since 2001

BY DON REDMOND

Flamborough Councillor Margaret McCarthy will appeal directly to Premier Dalton McGuinty for a more stringent application process after discovering the Ministry of Natural Resources has not turned down a quarry application since 2001.

Research provided to her by Mariel Jensen of Gravel Watch Ontario turned up evidence that the only way an application isn't passed through the MNR is if the applicant themselves withdraws the application.

Working on applications from 2001 to the end of 2008, Jensen discovered that only six of out 235 aggregate licences weren't approved by the MNR - five were withdrawn by the applicants themselves and one exceeded the allowable two year time limit.

To that end, McCarthy told the Compass that she was putting a motion forth at Hamilton City Council, "asking that better protection be applied (to the licensing process) to ensure the integrity of the McGuinty government's environmental legislation is followed through at the aggregate licenses level."

"There's no point in having the regulations if their (own government) agencies are not abiding by them."

Originally, Jensen had been researched the likelihood of the Ontario Municipal Board overturning a quarry licence and reported those statistics weren't good, either.

"As for the OMB, I have found only one case out of the 15 where a licence application was not granted (and only) because there were many errors in the application," Jensen said.

Despite that, on the same application, she noted, "the Official Plan amendment and the rezoning for the site were granted (by the OMB)."

But Jensen believed that "in these rare cases where approval of licence was not granted, the MNR and the OMB appear to have made decisions that left the door open for an applicant to reapply."

McCarthy also has a motion before Hamilton Council, asking the Province to outright deny the St Marys' quarry application at 11th Concession East and Milborough Townline.

The proposed quarry is right on the Campbellville- Flamborough border.