

Halton now pushing MNR to decline St Marys

BY DON REDMOND

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A planning report, scheduled to land on the laps of regional councillors at their May 8 council meeting, is asking councillors to turn thumbs down to the St Marys' quarry application.

Furthermore, the report, penned by Ron Glenn, Halton's Director of Planning Services and Chief Planning, is asking councillors to endorse a letter from Regional Chair Gary Carr to the Ministry of Natural Resources objections to the application.

Since Halton is considered a neighbouring community - and thus just a commenting agency - it is not certain how much weight their objections will carry with the MNR.

However, since the quarry is slated to be constructed on the Campbellville-Flamborough border at 11th Concession East and Milborough Townline, the effects it could have on Halton residents is significant, noted Glenn.

First and foremost is the potential haul route which would bring hundreds of gravel trucks through Campbellville on a daily basis.

"To date, staff at both the Region and the Town of Milton have not received an appropriate level of justification that would demonstrate that St. Marys selection of a preferred haul route through Milton is preferable to the other alternative routes," said Glenn.

"The materials prepared to date have not been completed in a manner that consider the social, cultural and environmental impacts of the road improvements, and resultant truck traffic to the areas that would be impacted by a truck haul route. Furthermore, the methodology used in the selection of a preferred haul route was in staff's opinion inappropriate, lacked transparency and did not reflect the impacts that the haul route would have to the natural environment, community features and existing transportation systems."

The Campbellville route to Highway 401 was the preferred route offered up by St Marys and despite alternative routes, Glenn believes that's the route St Marys will stick with.

"Given that St. Marys is projecting that 75 per cent of the crushed stone that is proposed to be extracted from the quarry is destined for the GTA and the City of Toronto, it is reasonable to conclude that the truck operators will want the shortest route to the delivery target in order to save money on fuel and time," he said. "That would result in a significant number of trips (over 500 each day) through Halton Region."

But that wasn't Glenn's sole concern. "Specifically, the Region has noted that there is the potential for serious impacts to the surface and groundwater resources, the natural environment, transportation infrastructure and existing traffic patterns and from the excessive noise, vibration and dust that would emanate from the proposed quarry."

Glenn also noted that his department was unhappy with the insufficient information being

offered up at this point by St. Marys, which has already submitted the application to the MNR.

“There is still a significant amount of work that needs to be completed by the proponent (St Marys) before the Region would be able to offer an opinion on the suitability of the subject lands for a below the water table quarry. Further study of the hydrogeology, transportation systems (haul-route), air quality, noise and the natural environment still needs to be completed, all of which have significant Regional implications.”