

Amriz seeks approval for extended pit on Shaws Creek Road

By Riley Murphy

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

On June 2, a public meeting was held for the public and Council to review an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment that would permit Amrize, formerly Lafarge, to expand its existing aggregate operations onto a property at 17903 Shaws Creek Road.

They are looking to extend an existing pit, known as Pit 3.

The approximately 63-acre lands are currently used for agricultural purposes and are located within the Greenbelt Plan Area.

The proposal is to extract and process aggregate above the established water table; approximately 51 acres of the subject property will be used for extraction.

The lands are to be restored 'close to existing grades' and 'rehabilitated to agriculture and natural heritage.'

At the public meeting, it was said that the proposed pit will extract aggregate above the water table, containing three million tonnes.

Amrize has applied for and designed the pit for a 'maximum tonnage limit of one million tons per annum.'

The processing plant is said to be located in the northeast corner of the site.

This proposal states that it utilizes the existing Pit 3 entrance and exit onto Mississauga Road and the existing haul route, and that 'there is no truck entrance onto Shaws Creek Road.'

Various residents raised concerns and questions about the 63-acre gravel pit expansion.

One Caledon resident shared that he currently lives near the proposed lands on Shaws Creek Road, and built his house there 38 years ago.

'You say there's three million tons of aggregate on the site, which you would think, three years, it's done. No, they're saying seven to 15, maybe 20,' the resident said. 'They have three or four other pits in Caledon. Why don't they get one done before they start another one?'

Ward 1 resident Kate Hepworth raised concerns over fill.

Hepworth asked staff, if 'the current one [pit] is going to go below the water table,' to which the answer was yes.

'The expansion that they're looking at, once you've got everything taken out, you're looking at putting fill in,' said Hepworth. 'Not only is it a question of extraction time, it's a question of fill time, and we are currently swamped with that.'

Later, Planners noted that the Pit 3 operation is also approved as a below-water operation, adding that the operation has been designed to allow both operations to run concurrently.

In her comments, Hepworth said the amount of dust that will fill the air and the number of trucks on the roads.

?We don't need more trucks. We don't want more trucks and our lungs can't take more trucks,? said Hepworth.

Caledon resident Cheryl Connors, who is also ??the executive director of the Canadian Network for Respiratory Care, touched on the impacts on the air quality from this type of operation.

?When aggregate companies, and the planners that represent them, come here to say the dust will be mitigated on site, it is an impossibility,? said Connors.

She recommended using real-time air quality monitoring.

Connors also said there is a ?cumulative impact,? adding that ?the number of pits and quarries in this small area of Caledon is extraordinary.?

?We have already long ago surpassed the critical mass when it's unsafe to keep putting more trucks on our roads. We don't have the infrastructure,? she said.

Connors also noted the loss of agricultural land with the proposed rezoning.

?What we don't have in this province is a lack of gravel,? she says. ?But what we don't have a supply of is farmland that we're able to grow food on, and we have some real treasures of farms in that area.?

Following the public meeting, once all comments have been addressed, planning staff will prepare a recommendation report for Caledon's planning and development committee.