

Caledon beginning review of its aggregate policies

By Zachary Roman

Caledon residents were recently updated on an aggregate policy study being undertaken by the Town.

Caledon's Manager of Strategic Policy Planning, Steven Burke, presented an update on Caledon's supplementary aggregate resources policy study at Caledon Council's June 13 planning and development committee meeting.

Before Burke's presentation, several Caledon community members delegated on the matter.

Burke said he appreciated the effort residents have put into reviewing lengthy, technical reports and that he will be considering all their feedback moving forward.

Burke explained the study was originally a joint study led by the Region of Peel; however, the upcoming dissolution of Peel means Caledon is now taking the lead on it. A background report for the study is being created by Mark Dorfman, who is the planning consultant Caledon hired to help with the study.

A project schedule is now in place for the study, with a goal of completion by October, when Caledon's Interim Control Bylaw (ICBL) for new pit and quarry applications expires.

There are two stages of background review planned, then two stages of policy formation, then recommendations and a final report. Background review is set to be complete by late July, and policy formation begins around early August. The creation of recommendations and the final report is scheduled for September and early October.

During the process, there will be meetings between Town staff and Caledon's recently-appointed aggregate resource community working group; briefings with Council; and public meetings. The tentative date for the first public meeting is September 15.

Burke noted that Caledon's ICBL can be extended for a year if necessary.

According to the Town, "the mapped deposits of mineral aggregate resources in Peel have been updated by the Province and the revised mapping will need to be incorporated into the Town of Caledon Official Plan."

This means there are new high potential mineral aggregate resource areas (HPMARA) in Caledon, most notably near Mono Mills.

One of the delegates speaking to the study was David Sylvester, Chair of the Forks of the Credit Preservation Group. He said Caledon currently does not have a thorough set of aggregate policies and that they are outdated.

Sylvester said municipalities must safeguard the health and wellbeing of their citizens and that he has yet to see evidence of enhanced air quality, noise, or groundwater requirements come from documents prepared by the Region of Peel.

He said Caledon must specify minimum separation distances between any new aggregate operation and existing buildings like homes, schools, and places of worship.

Mayor Annette Groves agreed and said in a recent meeting with the Province she asked it to review minimum distance requirements for pits and quarries.

Sylvester asked Council and Town staff to not underestimate the negative impacts that aggregate mining creates in Caledon.

?There's no doubt that we still have a long way to go to achieve the goal of modernizing our aggregate policies here in the Town of Caledon,? he said. ?Our citizens deserve nothing less than to be properly protected from these massive developments, and hopefully, the final results are finished aggregate policies that could serve as the gold standard for other communities.?

Caledon's Director of Planning, Antonietta Minichillo, said the update presented to Council on June 13 only featured documents from the Region of Peel and that Caledon's supplemental study is meant to address residents' concerns. The background report created by Dorfman will be the first document to come from Caledon's supplemental study and it's set to be complete by July 10.

Caledon resident of 30 years Debra Wilson was next to delegate. She said it's critical for Caledon to bring its policies in line with the needs of a growing population, environmental best practices, and citizen health.

?Let's tell the aggregate companies what is expected, clearly and in detail,? said Wilson. ?We should be telling them what they can and cannot do? please put us, the voters, taxpayers and people who live in Caledon, ahead of the aggregate industry with their deep pockets and powerful lobby.?