

Council supports distance requirements for pits and quarries

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Keeping pits and quarries away from places of residence is a priority for Caledon Council, a new motion suggests.

At Council's October 17 Planning and Development committee meeting, Mayor Annette Groves tabled a motion asking that minimum separation distances be implemented between licensed pits and quarries and designated and existing settlement areas.

Specifically, Groves requested the following:

That the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry and Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks be requested to support approval by the Region of Peel

policies in the new Caledon Official Plan that establish positive criteria for minimum influence areas and separation distances between the licensed pits and quarries, identified high potential mineral resource areas, designated and existing settlement areas, villages, hamlets, residential clusters and other sensitive land uses in order to achieve permanent land use compatibility within Caledon.

Groves' motion was approved on consent by Council and will be brought to a future Council meeting.

In her motion, Groves said Caledon has 23 active, licensed aggregate extraction operations. Of these, 19 are pits and four are quarries.

Caledon has 6,150 hectares that have been designated as High Potential Mineral Aggregate Resource Areas (HPMARA) that equates to 10 per cent of the total area of Caledon.

Groves said it's likely demand for aggregate will increase as the Provincial Government looks to build more homes.

These operations will continue to have impacts on Caledon residents and our community, reads the motion.

Groves said Caledon Council wants to ensure the community's concerns about aggregate are heard. These concerns include noise, dust, vibration, increased truck traffic, traffic safety, air pollution, impact to the water table and road degradation.

In her motion, Groves said the impacts of aggregate operations are felt most in Caledon's villages, hamlets, and rural residential clusters that are near HPMARA.

Groves' motion comes as Caledon is in the middle of reviewing the aggregate policies in its official plan.

Debra Wilson of the Forks of the Credit Preservation Group (FCPG) delegated to Groves' motion at the planning meeting.

She said the FCPG has been working with the experts it hired in areas like air quality, natural heritage, and hydrogeology to determine what a defensible separation distance might look like.

Wilson said the word defensible is key because any new aggregate policies Caledon implements will be challenged by the aggregate industry.

Wilson said the FCPG was hoping to see a report on the progress made towards Caledon's new aggregate policies at the meeting, and was dismayed to not see one on the meeting's agenda.

Town staff said such a report will be coming to Council on November 21.