

Effort fails to amend aggregate working group

By Bill Rea

Councillor Barb Shaughnessy has not abandoned her efforts to get the type of working groups she wants set up to look at aggregate issues in Caledon.

Council last month in committee accepted a staff recommendation to form a working group of aggregate and related matters. But Shaughnessy made it clear at the time it was not the kind of body she had been hoping for.

There had been suggestions that a committee be formed, but staff was reluctant to go along with that because the areas such a committee would address, such as progress of extraction compliance with the conditions of the licence, rehabilitation, noise, truck traffic, social and economic impact, etc., are matters that are outside the jurisdiction of the Town. They are the responsibility of Provincial authorities.

They added a working group would provide for more public and stakeholder input, and allow for more focus on matters the Town has authority over.

Shaughnessy was not taken with the staff recommendation at the time, stating she had heard from some constituents, and none of them were pleased with what had been proposed.

She wanted the matter referred back to staff for more information, and for a meeting to be held with interested stakeholders no later than May 31, but that idea was defeated.

She brought the matter up again last Tuesday night when council was dealing with the minutes of the committee meeting, putting forth an amendment calling for the creation of a working group to look at "mineral aggregate strip mining and related matters that the Region of Peel and Town of Caledon may address in their Official Plan review."

The amendment was narrowly defeated when it came to a vote.

She also wanted the terms of reference of the group to incorporate specific Official Plan policies and for it to come up with a work plan. The work plan would include such issues as aggregate recycling and comprehensive rehabilitation. She also wanted the group to be made up of "knowledgeable residents, stakeholders, industry and government officials," and for it to make quarterly reports to council.

Shaughnessy said the staff recommendation last month lacked clarity and substance.

"I thought it was very non-specific," she remarked.

Referring to the Official Plan policies to be reflected in the terms of reference, she said those policies took nine years to negotiate, at a cost to the taxpayers of about \$2 million, and were approved by the Ontario Municipal Board.

"These are complex issues," she declared, adding she wanted to make sure they get people who understand the issue.

She added the quarterly reports will make sure council gets timely information and citizens will know their input is reaching council.

Councillor Doug Beffort observed there have been efforts to set up a group or committee since 2003.

"It is important in our ward," he said.

Beffort added there are a number of issues which the Town can't control, but which are still important to residents.

He said what was in Shaughnessy's motion was premature. He wanted to let the working group get started and come back with what's going on and let it be tweaked and guided.