

Group seeks resident support for stronger aggregate policies

By **ZACHARY ROMAN**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A group that's been fighting for strengthened aggregate policies in Caledon is asking the public to lend their voice to the cause.

On May 23, the Forks of the Credit Preservation Group (FCPG) held a community meeting at the Alton Legion to update Caledon residents on its fight against a proposed blasting quarry and its efforts to have stronger aggregate policies implemented by the Town of Caledon.

Debra Wilson, an FCPG volunteer, said it is critically important for people to reach out to Caledon councillors and Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones so politicians know how invested the Caledon community is in the fight for stronger aggregate policies.

Wilson said the FCPG has been working with technical experts in areas like air quality, and that this is something that's important for residents to highlight when they reach out to politicians.

She said residents deserve to be protected from harmful effects of bad air quality that could come from aggregate operations if the right policies aren't implemented.

'We don't want the Ontario standard for air quality, because it's already out of date. What we want is the World Health Organisation (WHO) standard. It's the most current science, it's promoted worldwide, and it sets the standard for what's called PM2.5 that really tiny particulate dust that we've talked about before, that gets in your lungs and stays forever,' said Wilson.

The FCPG has also been working with experts to create policies that protect streams, wetlands, woodlands, and much more.

'We've been trying to be the voice for you, but we need to have a lot more voices saying to Council, 'this is what we want',' said Wilson. 'We have the science to confirm the need for modernized policies, we have the experts to back it up.'

Wilson said the FCPG is calling people to action, asking them to phone or email Caledon Mayor Annette Groves, members of Caledon Council, and Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones.

'The more voices out there, the more we're going to be heard' we've got that fire stoked and we need you out there helping us,' said Wilson.

FCPG president David Sylvester explained the Interim Control Bylaw (ICBL) that Caledon implemented, which prevents any new aggregate extraction operations in Town, will expire in five months.

The ICBL was implemented so Caledon could update its aggregate policies, which were found to be some of the weakest out of all Ontario's top aggregate-producing municipalities. Sylvester said work updating the policies had been slow going until this past January when the Town of Caledon hired a new project manager for the file.

'In the last two months, under the leadership of this new project manager, we've had about 20 meetings together with various experts and consultants,' said Sylvester. 'In the last six weeks, the public members, the six of us, (Aggregate Resources Community Working Group) individually and collectively have submitted, I would say at least 100 pages of recommendations and requests for the planners to consider with our new aggregate policies.'

The Aggregate Resources Community Working Group was appointed by Council in May 2023 to help with the aggregate policy

update process.

Sylvester said in roughly two weeks, it is expected the Town of Caledon will have a draft of its updated aggregate policies available for residents to review.

‘We’ll finally get a look at what the head planner feels is appropriate,’ said Sylvester. ‘There’s a very important date coming up: Wednesday, June 19’ the Town is going to arrange a public open house to review the draft aggregate policies with members of the public.’

Sylvester said more details on the open house will come at a later date, and to check the FCPG’s website for details.

‘If you want to contribute or have any input into this process of rewriting aggregate policies, I suggest you come to that public open house,’ said Sylvester.