

Opponents of Melville pit to hold two meetings in Alton and Orangeville

By James Matthews

Opponents of a proposed new aggregate operation near Melville will host a pair of town hall meetings to better voice their side of the argument.

Caledon council agreed in December to support an effort by Olympia Sand and Gravel to establish a pit between Porterfield and Willoughby Roads, just south of Dufferin County Road 109. The Melville Pit will be one of the largest in Caledon.

Residents appealed that decision Jan. 9 to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). In an effort to build on that momentum, Citizens Against the Melville Pit (CAMP) will host two public meetings to inform and update local residents about the impact they believe the pit will have.

The first scheduled for tonight (Thursday) at the Orangeville and District Seniors Centre at 7 p.m. at 26 Bythia St. The second meeting will take place Sunday (Feb. 23) in at 3 p.m. at Alton Mill at 1402 Queen St. West.

Samantha Asher, a CAMP representative, said the group hired experts to review reports supporting the operation, adding their data shows it will have a huge impact on water, air quality, traffic, property values, noise pollution and wildlife.

"The fight is not yet over and can still be won," she said. "It is time for us to take our community back before it's too late."

"It is time for us to say no to more gravel pits close to residential areas, schools, and local towns," she added. "When gravel takes priority over the security of our water supply, over the public health hazard of breathing in silica, over the right to enjoy peace and quiet on our properties, things have gone too far."

"The only way we win this appeal is together," said Asher.