

Protect Mono hosts fashion show fundraiser to oppose new gravel pit

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

A not-for-profit group opposed to a new open gravel pit in Mono hosted a fundraising fashion show at Mrs. Mitchell's Restaurant on Tuesday, October 8.

Protect Mono is trying to stop a proposed gravel pit at a location on Highway 89, near Violet Hill. The proposed pit would cover an area of over 300 acres.

The property is owed by Orangeville-based Greenwood Construction, which provides concrete, aggregates, and asphalt products to Orangeville and the surrounding area.

The fashion show began with lunch at the restaurant then featured a runway show with models wearing designs by Italian fashion designer Sofia Verna.

"We've been fighting an application by Greenwood Construction," explained Protect Mono chair Leeanne Farrugia. "They're an aggregate company and they applied to re-zone over 300 acres of farmland right across the road (from the restaurant). They own 410 acres there. We're a not-for-profit organization. We work to engage our neighbors and inform them of this application. We are concerned about the health and safety of our community and the environment. There are 120 families that live in a close radius to that area. Traffic safety is a huge issue. We're not anti-aggregate, this is just an inappropriate location for industrial activity. The land is not zoned industrial, it's zoned rural / residential."

An application to the Town by Greenwood to have the area re-zoned was turned down by Mono Council but there has since been an appeal of the decision.

Organization member Rosemarie Eger said she and members of the group would prefer to see the land remain as it currently zoned.

"It's productive agricultural land now. It's being farmed," Ms. Eger said. "Mono has a plan in place and there never was a pit plan there. It was always supposed to be residential and agricultural land. This area is a unique area. It came together from three glaciers and it formed the unique topography and geology that we have here. We're stewards of our world. We have to preserve something for our children and our grandchild."

Protect Mono has fears that an operational gravel pit in that location will present a danger on Highway 89 with increased heavy truck traffic entering and exiting the pit.