

Residents hope to have concerns heard over Monarch Plastics plan

By Bill Rea

Residents of the SouthFields Village area still have concerns about plans to put a plastic bottle factory in their area, although there's not much they can do about it.

Monarch Plastics Ltd. (MPL) is planning to build a large factory in the area, and since the project does not involve a rezoning or amendment to Caledon's Official Plan, there's really no prescribed mechanism for gathering public input.

Representatives of Monarch were at the last meeting of the SouthFields Village Residents' Group in November, and many of those on hand for the session made it clear they did not like what they were hearing.

They were told it will be about 316,000 square feet and will manufacture plastic bottles of various types. The bottles will be transported to various locations to be filled. No filling will take place at the plant. The process at the plant will take inert plastic pellets and form them into bottles.

The plant is slated to go on the north side of Highway 410 near Kennedy Road, south of Abbotside Way.

Lands to the west are being eyed for a French Catholic school.

Kenneth Bokor, team member with the residents' group, said the site for the plant is already zoned for prestige industrial.

Mayor Allan Thompson had told the residents the Town would be able to comment at the site plan stage.

The residents' group has come up with a list of concerns that they want considered at that point.

The concerns were available last week at an open house session hosted by the residents' group. Bokor said the list of concerns was compiled from input that had been hearing, and the purpose of last week's session was to inform people who what had been put together.

?'It's not an opposition, because we can't,' he commented.

The items on the list included a call that the plant not become operational until Abbotside Way is extended (even a temporary extension) to Heart Lake Road. It currently extends a little east of Learmont Avenue. As well, they have asked for a landscaped berm along Abbotside, with the planting of mature trees to reduce the visibility of the plant from the nearby homes

There is also a request that Monarch provide frequent, on-going air emissions testing (either monthly or quarterly).

The residents are asking that the loading and truck-parking area be moved to the south (near the 410) or to the east of the building so the truck entrance can be on the east side.

Bokor said there are currently plans for up to 10 silos, 54 feet in height, to store raw materials in the manufacturing process. He said residents want them lowered to 39 feet, which would be consistent with the height of the building. Failing that, he said they would like them moved to the southeast corner of the site, where there would be 'minimal impact on residents.'

There have been some concerns regarding noise that have been expressed. The residents have asked that the company be allowed to load silos only between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., and that silos be insulated or some steps taken to reduce the noise that would be generated there.

They would also want truck traffic allowed only between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. The company is being asked to consider using a single truck operator, instead of several, or independents.

There's been a request that the word 'plastic' not appear on the building's signage.

'It's a negative connotation,' Bokor said.

The residents are also looking for funding to help with the installation of four-way traffic signals at Abbotside and Kennedy Road, as well as for school-crossing guards.

In addition, they have asked that lighting levels around the site be lowered to reduce light pollution in the neighbourhood.

'I think there still is community anger over all,' Bokor commented, although he added things have improved as more information on things like emissions have come in.