

Residents updated on blasting quarry application at community meeting

By **Zachary Roman**

A meeting was held last week to update Caledon residents on matters related to a proposed blasting quarry south of Alton.

On May 17, the Forks of the Credit Preservation Group (FOTCPG) held a community meeting at the Alton Legion.

Susan Swail, a consultant for the FOTCPG, said at a previous meeting held by the group on April 18, it asked the Town of Caledon to communicate and coordinate with their group.

‘We heard the Town of Caledon’s Mayor and staff agree to provide us with a timeline/schedule of the Interim Control Bylaw process,’ Swail told The Citizen in an email. ‘Yet, to date we still have not received the promised project schedule.’

Swail said Caledon Mayor Annette Groves, Caledon’s Chief Planner Antonietta Minichillo, and the Ward and Regional councillors representing the part of Caledon the proposed quarry would be in, were invited to the May 17 meeting.

The quarry in question is a below-water-table limestone blasting quarry being proposed by CBM Aggregates, a division of Brazilian conglomerate Votorantim Cimentos. FOTCPG president David Sylvester has called the quarry a monster, and said it’s the biggest to ever be applied for in Caledon. He and his group are dedicated to stopping the quarry and protecting Caledon’s environment.

Mike Balkwill of the Reform Gravel Mining Coalition was the moderator at the May 17 meeting.

Sylvester was one of the first speakers, and he said Groves and Regional Councillor Wards 1, 2, and 3 Christina Early said they had other commitments and could not be at the meeting. He noted the attendance of Ward 1 Councillor Lynn Kiernan, and offered her a chance to speak later in the meeting if desired.

Minichillo and Town planning staff were invited, but chose not to attend.

‘They declined, stating that in their opinion, there wasn’t sufficient new information to justify their attendance here tonight,’ said Sylvester. ‘That was rather disappointing, to say the least.’

Sylvester said the FOTCPG has been asking the Town for a detailed Interim Control Bylaw (ICBL) work schedule covering critical dates up until October 18, when the Town of Caledon’s ICBL expires.

The Town of Caledon passed an ICBL relating to new aggregate applications in October 2022 to give itself breathing room to strengthen its aggregate policies. If Caledon is able to adopt new aggregate policies by the time the ICBL’s one-year limit is up, those new policies can be applied to CBM Aggregates’ application, which was received in December 2022.

Sylvester said Minichillo shared a draft copy of the ICBL work schedule with the FOTCPG a few days before the May 17, 2023 meeting, and he called it promising. He also provided an update on the Town of Caledon aggregate resources community working group. Sylvester said over 20 people applied to be community representatives on the group and that it should be up and running soon.

Under Ontario’s Planning Act, Councils are required to make a decision within 120 days of receiving combined Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications – both of which CBM Aggregates asked for when it submitted its blasting quarry application.

Sylvester said the FOTCPG asked the Town what the exact 120 day deadline would be for CBM Aggregates’ application in emails

on April 12, April 13, May 11, and May 16. Sylvester said on May 16, the group received a response from Minichillo that stated the 120 days expired on April 15.

?Many of you will recall that March 23 was the first date when the Town revealed that this application had been submitted? the citizens of Caledon were left with all of 23 days to go through this 6,000 page application and submit letters of objection and comments if they so chose to do so,? said Sylvester. ?We believe our community has been deprived of due process here.?

The FOTCPG is planning to have monthly meetings about the CBM Aggregates application moving forward. For more information, those interested can visit fcpreservation.ca.