



Quarry letters due Feb. 1

Onus on residents to re-state objections

Dianne Cornish

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Post offices in Carlisle and Campbellville were busier than usual last week as hundreds of registered letters trickled in from St. Marys Cement (SMC), signaling the start of a new step in the company's pursuit of an aggregate licence.

The letters, sent to area residents who objected to their licence application last spring, trigger a 20-day timeline in which objectors can either reconfirm their original objection to the Flamborough quarry plan and/or outline the action the aggregate company can take to resolve their objection.

If the objections aren't restated by registered mail to SMC and the Ministry of Natural Resources

(MNR), they will be considered withdrawn. The deadline for responses is February 1.

With the deadline looming, Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE), the citizen-based group that has opposed the quarry proposal in northeast Flamborough since it surfaced five years ago, has swung into action. It has organized a community meeting at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Elementary School in Carlisle for 6:30 p.m. next Wednesday (Jan. 20) to encourage people to confirm their objections and update them on what has happened since the last meeting.

The group has also authored an objection reconfirmation template letter that residents can access at the public meeting, from FORCE's website at www.stopthequarry.ca or at manned drop-in centres that will be operating from Thursday, Jan. 21 to Saturday, Jan. 23 (6-9 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday) at the Carlisle Farm Market Video Store and on Sat. Jan. 23 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Campbellville Lions Hall. Also, to make things easier and save people the cost of sending out registered letters, the group has arranged to collect the registered letters and arrange for their bulk delivery to SMC and the MNR.

The objection reconfirmation letters can be dropped off at the public meeting or at drop-off boxes at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School or Balaclava School.

Graham Flint, chair of FORCE, anticipates that a large number of the original objectors will reconfirm their objections to the quarry proposal because he says the company hasn't provided adequate answers to their concerns. "Nothing has changed, so why withdraw our objections?"

Between 700 and 800 letters are expected to be in the bulk deliveries.

St. Marys spokesperson Melanie Horton said the company sent out registered responses on Jan. 4 to those who filed form objection letters. Another 60 individual letters will be responded to by registered mail in early February, triggering a separate 20-day timeline.

In the meantime, St. Marys recently submitted a technical support document outlining its groundwater testing proposal for the Flamborough quarry site to various stakeholders who have been asked to review and submit comments on it by Jan. 14. The stakeholders, including representatives from the Ministry of the Environment, the MNR, CART (Combined Aggregate Review Team) and FORCE, met Dec. 21 and are tentatively scheduled to meet again on Jan. 19.

Revisions to the support document are anticipated as a result of the consultation with shareholders, Horton said. When the document is in its final form, it will be submitted along with an application for a Permit to Take

Water (PTTW) to the MOE. The permit is required before the company can proceed with testing on the site for its groundwater recharge system, which it says will mitigate impacts on groundwater by the proposed quarry's operation.

The permit will span a 10-month period and include 24 days of tests to be conducted over two seasons, either spring and summer or fall and spring, Horton said.

Flint said preliminary review of the test plan has revealed immediate concerns as most of the testing is proposed in buffer zones of wetlands on the site or, in some cases, right in the wetlands.

Responding to charges from FORCE that St. Marys submitted a PTTW application to the legislative approvals branch of the MOE three days before its first consultation with stakeholders, Horton said a standard application form was submitted, along with the technical support document, on Dec. 18, but the form was returned, at the company's request, on Dec. 21.

"It was always our intent to get input from all the stakeholders," she said. "As outlined in our December 22 press release, we intend to formally submit an application for a Permit to Take Water when we have had an opportunity to consider the input we receive."



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