

Bulletin #25 Fall 2015



Keeping score

The aggregate stats are in. Caledon continues to occupy its decades-long spot among Ontario's top ten aggregate municipalities. This year - June 2014 to June 2015 - it's still number 8 in the line up, responsible for all of Peel Region's 4 million tonnes of aggregate production - 370,000 tonnes more than last year. [Tonne has the same meaning as 'metric ton'.]

Not your granddad's multinational... Meet your new aggregate neighbour

Aggregate interests continue to consolidate. As you drive around Caledon you'll notice a number of company names attached to aggregate operations. For the most part these names are a historic reference to an earlier aggregate past and over the years these companies were absorbed by larger ones such as Lafarge. In some cases corporate giants like Aecon and Lafarge have pooled their resources to work together on the same properties. Last year the James Dick Group sold James Dick Concrete to Lafarge. This year multinational Lafarge and its subsidiaries were acquired by the larger and even more widely distributed multinational CRH Group which is home based in Ireland. Holcim's holdings, including its subsidiary Dufferin Aggregates is also part of this gigantic takeover that has just completed. In August a new multinational Lafarge-Holcim began operations in 65 countries as part of the CHR Group.

The Melville Pit decision - "dry aggregate extraction"?

CAMP spent 2 weeks this July pleading its case at the OMB in a challenge to the proposed Melville Pit. Olympia Sand and Gravel wants to excavate aggregate from its 293 acre property between Willoughby and Porterfield Roads at the Orangeville Caledon boundary. Last year Caledon Council decided to give the company the OP amendments and regulation changes it wanted despite the strong case that Ward1 Councillor Doug Beffort made to delay the decision until MOE water tests had been done, as Caledon has some serious water issues.

OMB Hearing Officer, Vice Chair of the OMB, Susan Schiller appeared to find the water concerns persuasive, particularly after the presentation from internationally respected hydrogeologist Ken Howard, CAMP's scientific expert. Her written decision is pending.

On September 18th in the absence of a written decision from the adjudicator, CAMP's lawyer Ian Gillespie met with the community to review Ms Schiller's verbal decision as he understood it so far: The key OMB ruling was no washing of aggregate at this site - a victory for CAMP. He observed that if there was no washing permitted on site, the commercial viability of the mine would be questionable as the aggregate here is of low quality and requires washing. However Gillespie warned the community that this may only be round 1 in challenging the operation of the mine.

At the moment the proponent has the right to withdraw up to 50,000 litres of water per day without a permit. But Gillespie warned that Olympia may very well apply for a permit [PTTW] from the Ministry of the Environment to take water above that amount. If the proponent is not permitted to wash aggregate on this site by the OMB decision, this seems like a Mexican standoff. Meanwhile should a PTTW process be implemented CAMP now has standing on the MOE committee that will be reviewing the application. Until a written decision is handed down by Ms Schiller nothing more definitive can be learned.

Water issues hold up Alton's development

For some years now the Town of Caledon's Alton Village Plan has been under development. On June 25th the community came to hear a presentation from consultants, retained by Peel Region, reporting on their findings about a secure and sufficient water supply for Alton as it contemplates expansion plans within a 16 year framework. Future population increases, housing needs, expansion plans being proposed by local entrepreneurs and an anticipated increase in tourism can only take place if there is sufficient water to sustain them.

Adequate and sound sources for municipal water are an issue that has plagued Caledon Village as well as Alton since both villages are dependent on the same municipal wells. Mark Schiller who is Peel's Director of Water Division has spoken on this issue many times at public meetings and has made it very clear, that without adequate and sufficient sources of water for municipal wells, further development will not go forward. Mr. Schiller is our water Tzar. He has been appointed by the province under Ontario's Clean Water Act as Peel Region's Risk Management Official [RMO] to implement key provisions of our Source Protection Plan.

Of the six sites investigated for this study, none met the criteria for municipal wells [[Alton Village Plan, Alton/Caledon Village Additional Water Supply Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Phase 1 and 2 Report, Regional Municipality of Peel](#)]. No viable option for a secure municipal water system has been identified.

As a matter of interest to REDC one of the potential six water sources was a pit pond within our aggregate corridor. Occasionally the question is asked why all this water pumping up from the aquifer at a gravel pit or quarry can't be used as a municipal reservoir. A technical memorandum within the consultants' report addresses this question: "There will be an ongoing risk to the region and its customer for having a drinking water supply located so close to active aggregate operations... Developing a surface water source using water extracted from the aggregate ponds does not meet screening criteria as it will be technically and financially challenging to implement, and would not (in all likelihood) meet the source water protection requirements."

Before Alton can get approval for further growth "a reliable water servicing solution needs to be identified". A second meeting has been announced but not scheduled as yet.

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Please be assured your e-mail information or mailing information will not be shared and will be used solely to update you on REDC activities. Thank you for your support of our common interest in our natural heritage and opposition to the McCormick Pit. If you wish to have your name removed from the update list please send your request to info@peopleforcaledon.com