

Believe it or not, it has been nearly seven years since we first heard about the Miller Braeside Quarry expansion plans. The application is finally complete and it now goes before council for their review and decision.

This is how it works. Miller experts write studies on things like the hydrogeology of the ridge, (our aquifers), traffic generated by the expansion, air quality because of the industries put into the quarry like the permanent asphalt and concrete plants, acoustics because of loud machinery etc. Then the Township hires more experts, paid for by Millers, to read the studies and write a review of them. These are the peer reviewers, the people who have the scientific knowledge to ask the right questions.

Then Council must read all these studies, discuss them and ask questions. Miller has said their experts will be available to answer any of Council's questions on *their* studies. Fine. But here's where the process breaks down. The peer reviewers have indicated questions and concerns about the studies and written those in their reports. So Council should be able to ask these people in person *why* they had concerns. But that isn't going to happen because Council will not hear from the peer reviewers. Why not? Bruce Howarth, County Planner, the person orchestrating this process says, no, no, no, you don't need to hear from them.

Well, as a member of the public, I disagree. I read the Air Quality Study and was interested to note what the peer reviewer said about it. Here was one of his concerns. Computer modelling is used to guesstimate how bad emissions will be at each nearby house. But the peer reviewer said, 'Wait a minute, you have used an open pit mining model which has a ratio of 1:10, depth to width. But the Braeside Quarry has a ratio of 1:55, depth to width!' How are these two comparable? They aren't!

So I think our Council and the public have the right to hear from not just the proponent's experts, but the experts hired to critique them. Should be fair, don't you think, not biased in favour of the proponent.

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