

Media Release

RESIDENTS VOICE OBJECTIONS TO PERMANENT ASPHALT PLANT IN BRAESIDE

May 6, 2013

Mayor Campbell and the Council of MacNab/Braeside have a monumental task ahead of them to read and digest all the comments they receive from the residents of the Township regarding the Miller Braeside Quarry expansion and industrialization. Residents have a chance to speak at a public meeting tonight in Braeside. Council has the responsibility for the health and welfare of all their constituents; that responsibility extends to residents of this Township for decades to come.

Members of FACT-MB Inc. (Friends Addressing Concerns Together in McNab/Braeside), have stated very clearly that they want the Braeside Quarry to expand safely, monitored carefully for blasting damage to residents or negative impacts on the groundwater or the alvar. But FACT says that industrialization of the quarry with permanent asphalt and concrete plants, and the whole Miller industrial complex is just too dangerous to the air and the water in a rural residential area; risks are too great.

This company, Miller Paving Ltd., has already been convicted of **nuisance, trespass and negligence in a court decision in November, 2011**. Braeside residents had filed a suit for adverse effects from a *temporary* asphalt plant at this location.

As well, FACT-MB says that the financial downside to the Township is considerable, from loss of tax revenues from diminished property values, to deterioration of infrastructure from heavy truck traffic, to having to provide a source of safe drinking water to the residents of the whole Braeside Ridge, if pollution should occur.

FACT has hired two eminent, highly qualified independent experts to evaluate the expansion studies. Here are some of their comments.

“The proposed Miller Braeside Quarry expansion would be problematic even in the best of circumstances, given the more than 100 homes located within 1 km of the proposed quarry,” said Wilf Ruland, a widely-experienced hydrogeologist retained by FACT-MB.

But the proposed quarry expansion’s setting on a bedrock ridge, means that the expansion proposal would be competing with residents’ wells for the limited groundwater resources available on the ridge,” said Mr. Ruland. “There is a real risk of wells losing water”.

Mr. Ruland had called on the Company to prepare a water balance for the Braeside Ridge when he first looked at the proposal four years ago, and is concerned that this necessary work has not been done.

Mr. Ruland went on to indicate, "The threats to residents' wells and the natural environment are exacerbated by the proposal to put an asphalt plant in the quarry. There have been no studies done on the potential water quality impacts of the asphalt plant, and no monitoring is proposed. Moreover, the Company's track record with portable asphalt plants at this location is poor."

Asphalt plants are known sources of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) which are potentially toxic organic chemicals.

"This is not the place I would be putting an asphalt plant," said Mr. Ruland, who recommended to his clients that they oppose the quarry application for this reason in particular.

Dr. Henry S. Cole, the group's air pollution expert, warned that placing a hot mix asphalt and concrete plant so close to homes is likely to expose families to a variety of toxic emissions including pollutants that have been linked to cancer.

Cole, a former U.S. Environmental Protection Association atmospheric scientist, said, "The air modeling assessment conducted by Miller's consultants contains serious problems – errors that are likely to cause significant under-prediction of the actual pollution to which residents are exposed."

Cole noted that young children, the elderly and chronically ill are especially vulnerable to fine particulates and other emissions associated with asphalt plants. He added, "Someone trying to play, picnic or garden in their backyards so close to the asphalt plant will be subjected to those toxic emissions."

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