

Township Rejects Quarry...Again!

A revised rezoning application to allow a large scale rock quarry on a hillside facing Peninsula Lake--- the first officially sanctioned aggregate industry for this municipality---was presented to the Mayor and Council for the Township of Lake of Bays on December 6th, 2005. Their verdict was a clear and unanimous denial.

At the meeting in Dwight this week a broad range of concerns and objections to this proposed new quarry were expressed by Mayor Peake, Councillors, planning staff, as well as Janet Amos, environmental planner for the Peninsula Lake Association. These boil down to inevitable, serious, negative effects that would impact areas surrounding this site, most particularly Pen Lake. Summarizing, it was Council's position that a quarry would be inappropriate for this location because it's operations would be seen, heard and otherwise felt in ways that are inconsistent with provisions of the Official Plans for both the Township and the District of Muskoka, as well as the Provincial Policy Statement and the Pen Lake Plan.

This meeting was necessary to remedy a technical situation that emerged during the OMB (Ontario Municipal Board) hearing into the quarry issue. As previously indicated, recent changes in the Township's Bylaws without a transitional provision nullified the legal basis for the OMB appeal that was underway until adjourned on November 3rd, 2005. This week's decision allows this matter to resume at the OMB, but only after it is appealed by the quarry applicant.

We expect that will happen soon, and that another OMB hearing will be scheduled to begin sometime in the first half of 2006. More importantly, we also anticipate the focus will remain on the same issues previously raised at the OMB and the matter will be finally settled then.

If interested in more detail on these issues you can view Janet Amos' letter outlining objections of the Peninsula Lake Association at the website www.penlake.ca

Minutes from this most recent Council meeting will soon be posted on the website for the Township of Lake of Bays at www.lakeofbays.on.ca/council. If you have questions in reference to the House Quarry you can contact the Planning Department at 1-877-566-0005 or 705-635-2272.

Currently we are assessing the impact of this delay on our case and its prospects. We have made good progress to this point, but obviously more will be necessary to stop this quarry. We will continue monitoring the situation, and of course, will update you whenever there are significant developments such as re-scheduling of the OMB hearing.

As always, donations to assist this important environmental cause are necessary and most welcome at anytime...this year or next! Despite the amazingly generous support from so many in our community, we still have some distance to go to meet our needs and effectively oppose this quarry. Information is available at www.penlake.ca

While we now expect a period of relative quiet from this disturbing development proposal in coming weeks, please feel free to contact us if you require any further information.

The Quarry Committee for the Peninsula Lake Association

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