

Balaclava School Council



Working Together School - Parents - Community

Be it resolved that, in the interest of the health and safety of our children and the health and safety of the community at large, the Balaclava Public School Council is unanimously opposed to the proposed open-pit mine aggregate extraction operation (hereinafter referred to as the proposed quarry) on 11 th Concession East. We believe that:

- This proposed change in land use is incompatible with the existing municipally approved agricultural/rural uses in the area, including the two schools, (Balaclava Public and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic) and one child care centre (located at Mount Carmel) found just one concession south on the 10th Concession East.
- A quarry, especially one operating below the water table, would threaten the quantity and quality of the schools' groundwater supplies which are accessed through drilled wells and, indeed, those of the broader community in Carlisle and rural Flamborough. We note that groundwater quality and supply are already significant issues in the community requiring the attention of the municipality in the short and long term.
- The estimated 1000 truck-trips per day on narrow secondary roads, many without shoulders, are inappropriate. The volume of heavy vehicles, their speed, and propensity for wide turns would present a real safety risk to our students waiting for buses, traveling in buses, and undertaking recreational pursuits after school hours (including walking, biking, and horse back riding, among others).
- Air quality at the schools would be adversely affected. We note that the air intake vents at Balaclava are located on the north side of the school where winds would carry particulate and dust directly down-wind from the proposed operation. Both schools use their grounds for a variety of school athletic and community activities, including the Terry Fox Run, such that students would be exposed to particulate inhalation. After regular school hours the schools are used for Gymmies gymnastics program, sports events/practices, and specialized classes.
- Noise from the proposed operation's blasting, heavy equipment, and hauling vehicles would be disruptive to academic, athletic, and extra- curricular pursuits by students, staff and the community.
- Broader negative environmental impacts on provincially significant wetlands, wildlife, habitats, plant-life, and their connecting eco-systems are concerns as well.
- The community is an active farming community, operating from late March until late November for seasonal activities and year round for others. Agricultural uses range from livestock (cattle, hogs, and sheep); to horse breeding, training and stabling; to vegetable and fruit farming; to agricultural support operations. Slow moving farm vehicles carry workers and implements to and from fields to plant, irrigate and harvest.

We ask that the City of Hamilton decline any application for an Official Plan amendment and/or zoning by-law change to permit the proposed quarry and that the Province of Ontario, through its agent, the Ministry of Natural Resources, decline any application for a license/permit under the Aggregate Resources Act.

We also ask that the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board take a position, as a commenting agency to the City of Hamilton, in support of Balaclava Public School and its staff and students.

We ask, as well, that the Secretary-Treasurer of the School Council forward this resolution to the attention of our colleagues on the School Council at Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

On behalf of Balaclava Public School Council, dated this 1st day of June, 2004.

Jennifer Raymond
Chair

Jan Whitelaw
Vice-Chair