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## Quarry opponents advised to remain vigilant

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Opponents of the Flamborough Quarry were told Tuesday night not to assume that their battle is over despite the Ontario government's unprecedented decision two months ago to freeze the zoning on the proposed quarry site to agricultural and conservation management.

While the zoning restriction has "changed the landscape of our battle" and is seen as a positive turn of events against the St Marys Cement (SMC) proposal, FORCE (Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment) chair Graham Flint cautioned area residents not to let their guards down.

"We're not done yet," he told a crowd of over 100 attending the sixth annual meeting of the anti-quarry group at the Lawson Park Family Camp Resort on the 11th Concession, just down the road from the proposed 150-hectare quarry site.

Since the zoning freeze was announced, the aggregate company has taken two clear steps indicating that it is not ready to concede defeat. In May, the company asked that the freeze be revoked and that the matter be referred to an Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearing for a decision. The company also filed an application last month for a permit to take water (PTTW) to conduct pump tests on the site.

Both steps are seen by FORCE, a community group opposing the quarry, and its lawyer Chris Barnett as signs that the company plans to go ahead with its aggregate licence process despite heightened opposition.

Barnett, who was a guest speaker at the meeting, said the timing and scope of the OMB hearing has yet to be determined, but its duration is dependent on the quarry's applicant and St Marys has "clearly signaled" that it's not backing away from its plans.

"The involvement of the community is really important," Barnett stressed. "You have to stand firm."

A similar message came from former World Wildlife Fund-Canada president Monte Hummel, who lauded FORCE for its work in "helping to win one for the planet" by fighting to protect the community's water source. "You're at a critical point in your battle," he told the crowd. "You need to stay engaged and to stay well-funded," he advised while warning that OMB hearings "can be long and costly."

Noting that victory in environmental battles can never be taken for granted, Hummel recommended that quarry opponents "stick together to see this thing through." To be victorious, "perpetual vigilance" will be needed, he said.



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