

Daniel Nolan Sat Mar 09 2013 07:46:08 0 Comments 2 Recommend

Carlisle quarry proposal is dead

Province will pay cement firm \$15m

A controversial Carlisle quarry is no more.

The Ontario government and St. Mary's Cement have reached an agreement that will ensure a huge quarry near Carlisle will not be built and protect local wetlands and water supply.

The agreement was announced late Friday afternoon by the province.

It covers 530 acres of agricultural land in Ontario's Greenbelt. A conservation easement will be placed on title to ensure that no quarry will be built on these lands and that the province maintains its conservation purposes for the future.

St. Mary's Cement was proposing to build a quarry on a 150-hectare site at the 11th Concession and Milborough Line, just north of Carlisle. It was opposed by a citizens group, Friends of Rural Communities and the province in 2010 issued an unprecedented order halting the firm's attempt to establish the limestone quarry. The order declared the site must remain zoned rural and conservation management in perpetuity.

In turn, St. Mary's in 2011 threatened to take the matter to NAFTA.

The agreement comes after a regulatory body late last year quashed a proposed quarry on the Niagara Escarpment near Mount Nemo in north Burlington. That quarry was sought by Nelson Aggregates and also was opposed by a citizens' group involving singer-songwriter Sarah Harmer. The decision to nix it by the special panel came after a four-year application process that included 15 months of hearings, nearly 300 exhibits and 60 witnesses.

As a result of the new agreement, St. Mary's and the province have agreed to withdraw all current or future litigation. The province has also agreed to pay St. Mary's Cement \$15 million toward the costs the company has incurred on the project.

The province says the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing will return zoning responsibility for the lands to the City of Hamilton, so that St. Mary's Cement or any future owner of the property will have to apply to the local municipality for any planning approvals.

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OPPOSITION

Spectator file photo

The proposed quarry roused opposition from many residents, including Graham Flint, spokesperson for Friends of Rural Communities (shown here at the proposed quarry site in a 2010 file photo).

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