

R&M Construction granted \$1.3 million for restoration project

By Chris Halliday
Metroland Media Group



The Mill Creek's greatest foe is perhaps man, but that same adversary aims to invest \$1.3 million in an effort to rehabilitate the troubled waterway.

Flooding, increased debris, sediment buildup, erosion and changes to the water channel — these are just some of the challenges facing Mill Creek.

Now, Orangeville council has taken

a big step towards combatting that fate.

During a recent meeting, council awarded the long-planned restoration project to Acton-based R&M Construction for \$1.3 million.

The highest of the 11 tender bids re-

ceived came in at nearly \$3 million.

At one point, the Mill Creek powered the mills spurring the town's early growth.

Yet today, the waterway is losing the fight against urbanization.

As Orangeville has become more urban, the water channel has changed due to an influx of water funneling into the creek bed and a number of man-made additions as well.

It's a common trend seen in many creeks across southern Ontario.

"It's been neglected," said Coun.

Sylvia Bradley, chair of Orangeville Sustainability Action Team (OSAT), shortly after the town's Mill Creek restoration project was getting started.

"It really is a jewel in the middle of town and most people don't know it is there," she added.

In addition to town staff, Aquafor Beech Limited, the environmental consulting experts hired by the town to complete an environmental assessment of the Mill Creek, recommended council award R&M Construction the contract.

In a letter to council, Rob Amos, fluvial geomorphologist for Aquafor Beech Limited, noted the Acton-based firm has more than 30 years experience of undertaking similar types of environmental projects.

"Aquafor Beech Limited has worked co-operatively with R&M on a number of high profile creek restoration projects throughout southern Ontario," Amos wrote. "The project experience provided by R&M Construction was directly relevant to the proposed works for Mill Creek."

Cleo 'catnapped': Skinny kitten at centre of pet store petition stolen

Cleo, the kitten at the centre of a controversy swirling at a Bramalea pet store, was cat-napped last month, Peel Regional Police have confirmed.

Police said the young Abyssinian kitten, which set off a public outcry after a picture of her appearing skinny and on display at PJ's Pets in Bramalea City Centre was posted on social media Saturday, was stolen just before Christmas.

Police were called by a store em-

ployee Dec. 21 at 2:15 p.m. to report the theft, which happened at 9:30 p.m. the day before, 30 minutes before store closing, according to police.

Peel spokesperson Const. Bally Saini said the employee gave police a surveillance video that showed someone opening a cage, removing Cleo and concealing her before walking out the door and meeting up with a second suspect.

After viewing the video, police

searched the mall and arrested two suspects in the food court. Cleo was found in a house with as many as 11 other cats, according to PJ's Pets spokesperson Amy Young.

Young said a vet checked out Cleo after she was returned, and then again on Sunday at the direction of the OSP-CA, which is investigating complaints that the kitten is being neglected. According to a letter the Mississauga-

based PJ's posted on their official Facebook page, the cat was born on Oct. 23, making it currently 10 weeks old, and is scheduled to be examined again on Jan. 12.

"She has lost weight, but that was due to the stress of the situation," Young wrote in an email response to The Guardian.

Charged with theft under \$5,000 is Brooke Charbonneau, 18, and Danielle Chapman, 20, both of Brampton.



Cleo was stolen from PJ's Pets in Bramalea City Centre on Dec. 21.

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