

The ROCKWOOD Miller

Quarry boss digs own hole at public meeting in Rockwood

Probing questions, differing but sacred points of view, and one cringe-worthy, foot-in-the-mouth moment were featured at a public forum on the Hidden Quarry application on Highway 7, between Acton and Rockwood on Saturday.

The crowd of approximately 100 at St. John's Anglican Church in Rockwood – many wearing buttons of the Concerned Residents Coalition (CRC) protest group – was encouraged to be “reasonably passionate” by moderator, Father Marcus Germaine. But there was widespread derision for Greg Sweetnam, vice-president of the applicant, James Dick Construction Ltd., after he made several gaffes, insulting one expert, and inadvertently offending another critic, a Mary Rubio, who lives beside James Dick's Guelph quarry.

Sweetnam said he could offer “some interesting things” about Dick's dealings with Mary Rubio and then said: “Just because someone says a lady is a witch does not mean she is a witch, and it doesn't mean you burn. You got to go through evidence of...” Sweetnam said before being stopped by groans of angry disapproval from many in the crowd.

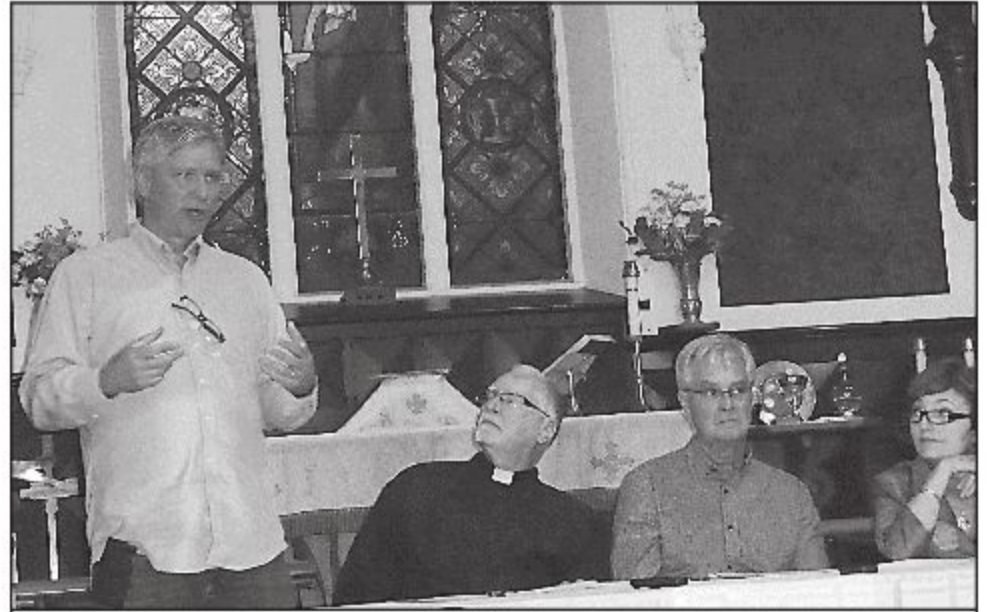
“Is that coarse language? I'm sorry, I didn't mean to be offensive, but what I mean is that there something very different from making an accusation and it being a reality,” Sweetnam said before being bailed out by Father Marcus who calmed the crowd, calling Sweetnam's witch comment an “unfortunate illustration.”

Most of the questions and concerns during the two hour meeting were directed to Sweetnam, whose company wants to mine aggregate on the

Seventh Line at Highway 7 in Nassagaweya. Dick requires a rezoning application from Guelph/Eramosa Township Council, and a licence from the province.

In response to many questions about gravel truck safety and haul routes, Sweetnam said they don't like to make “gravel travel.” “Close to market is the answer, less fossil fuel, less congestion, less cost to the consumer... less wear and tear on the roads, fewer accidents...” Sweetnam said, adding the Hidden Quarry site a “double whammy resource” with an Amabel dolostone deposit, the highest quality stone in Ontario.

In her comments, CRC scientific committee member, Stephanie De Grandis, who raises cattle near the quarry, stressed the potential human and environment impacts, and the loss of prime agricultural land, which she said should trigger an agri-



QUARRY FORUM: Greg Sweetnam (left) of James Dick Construction Ltd., detailed his company's applications for a quarry on Highway 7, between Rockwood and Acton, at a forum in Rockwood on Saturday hosted by St. John's Anglican Father Marcus Germaine, and including Doug Tripp and Stephanie De Grandis of the Concerned Residents Coalition. - Frances Learment photo

cultural assessment by Guelph/Eramosa Township Council.

Sweetnam dismissed some of De Grandis' concerns as “absolutely wrong.” He said James Dick operates 18 pits and quarries in Southern Ontario and gets “very few complaints” each year, underlining a dichotomy of existing pits fitting into the community and operating in the community with no complaint, versus new, imaginary sites which get all this attention.

Dick plans to blast below the water level at the Hidden Quarry to mine aggregate that would be crushed on site

and trucked to market, a process that raised a whole host of issues including water quality and quantity, blasting, noise, dust, traffic and vibrations. Sweetnam assured the crowd that quarries face tough provincial rules, and don't have “carte blanche to impair the environment...we do not have bodies piling up outside Ontario's existing pits and quarries. We are not allowed to pollute the environment...” he said.

Summing up for the Concerned Residents Coalition, spokesman Dick Tripp said they aren't anti-aggregate or anti-growth, but want to ensure there are no negative impacts on the community from the application. “This is an issue of stewardship and balancing priorities...this is an issue of justice...” he said, adding they face an industrial operation which will enrich a company at a loss to local citizens and the environment.

Summing up, De Grandis said she is convinced there is serious scientific evidence that “dust from quarries can cause cancer.” She called on the CRC to stage a pub-

lic relations campaign to highlight the potential impacts of the Hidden Quarry on agricultural land.

In his final words, Sweetnam drew loud boos when he dismissed concerns of economic loss. “You folks and your financial contributions that you make in the context of this process – with all due respect – may be the only financial loss that you incur”, he said adding the successful multi-million fight against a James Dick quarry proposal in Caledon achieved nothing and he is still shipping gravel from Collingwood and Muskoka to markets in the GTA because that quarry was turned down.

Many expect that the final decision on the Hidden Quarry will come from an Ontario Municipal Board hearing panel, because the losing side would likely appeal to the higher authority.

Asked if tax payer's money would be spent on the application, Guelph/Eramosa Township Mayor Chris White said that depends on the outcome, and a final report is expected to Council this fall.

FISH FRY!

ROCKWOOD

Everyone is Invited

FISH FRY!

WHEN: Friday, May 23, 2014
 WHERE: Rockmosa Community Centre
 SEATINGS: 5:00pm or 7:00pm
 TICKETS: Adults \$15.00
 Children (under 12 yrs): \$8.00
 ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY!

FOR TICKETS, PLEASE CALL:
 Fred Hawkins 519-824-0454
 Maria Drenters 519-856-9196
 Andrew Vince 519-856-9409

Presented by the Rockwood Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Women's League

HISTORY IN NASSAGAWEYA

The Nasagaweya Historical Society is holding a History Day in conjunction with the churches of Nassagaweya. The purpose is to give the community an opportunity to view these historic buildings.

Each church will have knowledgeable people on hand to discuss current information, the history of their church and also family histories as available.

Saturday May 24th, 2014
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Ebenezer United

12274 Guelph Line
 (north of Brookville between 20th and 25th sideroads)

Nassagaweya Presbyterian

3097 15 Sideroad
 (just east of Guelph Line)

St. John's Anglican

10009 Guelph Line at 10th Sideroad

St. David's Presbyterian

130 Main Street in the Village of Campbellville



The Nasagaweya Historical Society

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 Campbellville, ON L0P 1B0

www.nasagaweyahistoricalsociety.com

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