

Committee agrees neighbours had their 'fill' of trucks

By CYNTHIA GAMBLE
Staff Writer

Neighbours in the 22 Sideroad and Eighth Line community breathed a sigh of relief—at least temporarily—after the Site Alteration Committee unanimously refused an Eighth Line property owner a variance that would have allowed close to a million cubic metres of fill onto the property.

More than 40 neighbours crowded into the public gallery of the Halton Hills Council Chambers Thursday afternoon where the Site Alteration Committee (SAC) had convened to hear the application. They brought with them a petition with 138 signatures.

Many of those residents—13—lined up to speak against the proposal fighting to stop a repeat of what happened last year when trucks roared up and down 22 Sideroad and Eighth Line to dump fill at 12519 Eighth Line, owned by Rick and Sally Stull.

The neighbours raised numerous concerns from speeding trucks on narrow country roads forcing grandmothers to jump into side ditches, parents fearing for their children's safety while waiting for the school bus, crumbling roads from overweight trucks, noise, dust and worry about well water contamination, and lack of oversight on the type of fill.

"All of the residents... (who) have made written submissions to your committee oppose this permit," Eighth Line resident Elizabeth Doell summed up. "For the Site Alteration Committee to approve this application and to subject area residents to five years minimum of heavy industrial trucking, heavy equipment, noise, diesel fumes, air pollution and contamination of our drinking water is irresponsible and unacceptable."

Throughout the summer and fall of last year 56,086 cubic metres of fill—the Town wants verification of that number—was trucked into the property. Only after being ordered by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, Nov. 30, 2012 to cease, did the Stulls' company, 1244002 Ontario Inc., apply for a variance to the Site Alteration Committee in December 2012.

According to Town staff there were two requests: to permit the continued operation of the existing business to bring in clean fill and



The entrance to the Stull property at 22 Sideroad and Eighth Line. Photo by Ted Brown

granular and other material for storage and subsequent trans-shipment (essentially an aggregate transfer station), and two, to import approximately 900,000 cubic metres of fill to return the site to a grade that would allow farming. (The Stulls own a cattle operation on an adjoining property).

In a letter sent to 74 residents Sunday, May 12, the Stulls said they were proposing "a 'green' initiative to agricultural use from a former pit."

"The project is likely to take up to five years to complete as we acquire the appropriate fill material. Any contract material must be suitable for agricultural land (in accordance with Ministry of the Environment standards)", the letter read.

The matter was heard in February but SAC members had many questions such as number of residents impacted, stability of 22 Sideroad, cost to maintain and repair the roads, traffic impact, well water impact, and the meeting was adjourned until last Thursday to give both staff and the applicant time to answer them.

But according to the staff report prepared by Steve Grace, Manager of Development and Traffic Engineering, by Thursday there were still a multitude of outstanding items that did not address SAC's questions.

Clare Riepma, the Stulls' consultant, outlined 11 points disputing the staff report.

Grace said, "We stand by the staff report." Riepma said he and his clients were willing to continue to work with the Town to satisfy requirements and to have conditions imposed on the variance permit, including the acceptance of well monitoring.

Riepma said in his brief to SAC that the only

impact on neighbours is the road traffic and mitigation efforts would include limiting the number of trucks to an average 120/day and providing street cleaning, sweeping and dust control equipment to maintain the road at all times as well as a payment of six cents/tonne to the Town for road damage repairs. Riepma pointed out that 2,300 vehicles a day currently travel on 22 Sideroad. A current berm around the pit would protect residents from the noise and dust generated by pit operations, he said, over jeers from the gallery.

"We submit that this application clearly meets every one of the tests that you (SAC) are required to apply and therefore we request that you approve this application," said Riepma, pointing to the Site Alteration bylaw section that states variances can be approved if it would result in maintaining or improving the overall fertility of the site and is incidental part of a normal agricultural practice.

But SAC vice-chair Andrew Stabins suggested that the importing of 900,000 cubic metres of fill is hardly an incidental part of a normal agricultural practice—a requirement under the Site Alteration Bylaw.

Councillor Joan Robson, a member of SAC, said, "We attempted to find a balance over the years, but it's just not happening so I feel the best way to deal with it is to refuse this exemption."

Town Council must still ratify the decision. Meanwhile the Stulls have filed an Ontario Municipal Board appeal against the Town's Official Plan Amendment 15 and Zoning Bylaw. The Ontario Municipal Board has not scheduled a hearing at this time.

• For more visit www.theipf.ca

Police blotter

Two charged in car break-in

Halton Police charged two Georgetown men after someone witnessed a car break-in on Guelph St. about 1:30 a.m. Thursday (May 16) and called police.

Police arrived and a short time later found two suspects on foot about two blocks away. Stolen property was recovered and the suspects were arrested.

Charged with theft under \$5,000 and breach of probation and held for a bail hearing Friday is Richard Hilts, 29.

Charged with theft under \$5,000 is Dustin Hilts, 20. He is to appear in court June 24.

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A Mississauga man was charged with failing to provide a breath sample after Halton Police investigated an incident where bottles were smashed in the parking lot at Nashville North about midnight Friday (May 17).

A driver of a vehicle was investigated. Charged is Matthew Wick, 21, of Mississauga.

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Halton Police issued 1,397 tickets during Canada's National Safety Road Safety Week May 13 to 20.

That total was in addition to seven impaired driving charges and one fail to provide breath sample charge.

Of the Highway Traffic Act charges laid 97 were for distracted driving, 37 were for seatbelts and 17 for careless driving. A total of 18 license suspensions were issued relating to the charges.

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