

Quarry "blasted" for missing information in report

Application filed for Flamborough quarry

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

A quarry application for a controversial pit proposed in the Flamborough area is raising some concerns about the lack of information on blasting at the site as well as the pit's long-term impact on the water table, according to a spokesperson for FORCE. The group, known as Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment, also maintains that Ontario's new draft of its Greenbelt legislation presents a strong argument against the development of the site as a limestone quarry.

Graham Flint, who speaks on behalf of members of Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE), says the application filed by Lowndes Holdings Corp. at the City of Hamilton has some notable omissions. Lowndes Holdings Corp. presented a proposal in June of this year to develop a 238-acre quarry on land situated near Milborough Line and the 11th Concession. And the City of Hamilton accepted the company's application for consideration late last month.

"One of the areas that is missing in the report and is very much on the minds of people in the community is the whole discussion of blasting. There's no information in this 1000-page application about how often they're going to blast.... How are officials supposed to make good decisions about the appropriateness of this operation when critical information about blasting isn't really presented?"

The impact on the water table, particularly when the quarry is excavated to its deepest level, is another point that

concerns Mr. Flint. "We think frankly that there's the potential that there could be some disastrous impact on the water. The study that's in the planning report doesn't look at the water impact when they're at the deepest level."

Typically when a limestone quarry is developed the site will be developed in stages - known as lifts - where excavations occur up to a certain number of metres across the whole quarry site. The first lift will be a certain number of metres all across and any subsequent lifts would involve excavating at deeper levels. Mr. Flint says that water studies have been completed for the shallower excavations, but nothing has been done

THE QUARRY WILL OPERATE UNDER AN ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

for the deeper excavations.

However, Robert Long, who's working on behalf of Lowndes Holdings as an environmental engineer, says the water table is being closely monitored. At the moment, he noted that there are 12 monitoring wells on the property, each of which is being monitored every month. "And before we do our pumping tests we will be asking the neighbours if we can monitor their wells."

Mr. Long stressed that the quarry will operate under an adaptive management plan that would take into consideration everything from blasting to any

changes in the water table. An adaptive plan means that the quarry will be "continuously monitored" during its lifespan, according to Mr. Long. He added that if there are any negative effects that occur then "the operation is adapted to correct the problem."

As well, Mr. Long said that phase one of the project would involve blasting that's furthest away from any adjacent properties, as it will be situated "in the middle of the property." During the first phase, he emphasized that continuous monitoring will be beneficial. "It will take approximately four to five years for the first lift which is phase one. And that will give us five more years to monitor information."

Mr. Flint, however, believes that any quarry developed in the area goes against the province's draft of its recent Greenbelt Plan. He says that the area proposed for development by Lowndes Holdings is part of the natural heritage system which is defined in the Greenbelt Draft Plan, dated October 2004, as including "natural heritage features" such as wetlands, significant woodlands, and endangered, threatened, and provincially rare species. "The area, in which the Carlisle quarry is proposed by Lowndes Holdings, is part of the natural heritage system that provides a continuous and permanent land base necessary to human health and ecological health in the Greenbelt and beyond."

David Lowndes, who hopes to develop the site as a quarry, says at the moment his company has no comment on the Greenbelt Plan. However, Mr. Long noted that the original Greenbelt task force, when it imposed a freeze on development in designated greenbelt areas, excluded "pits and quarries in rural areas." The land is currently designated as rural and conservation management under Flamborough's Official Plan, so a change would be required to designate the land under aggregate extraction.

Since June, FORCE has also been vocal in its opposition to the amount of truck traffic the quarry is expected to generate. Mr. Flint says that, according to Lowndes' application, in peak times there will be 570 loads going in and another 570 loads going out of the quarry each day. "So you are well over 1,140 truck trips per day."

FORCE, which is a citizen-based advocacy group that represents supporters in Campbellville, Kilbride, Mountsberg, Freulton, and Carlisle, can

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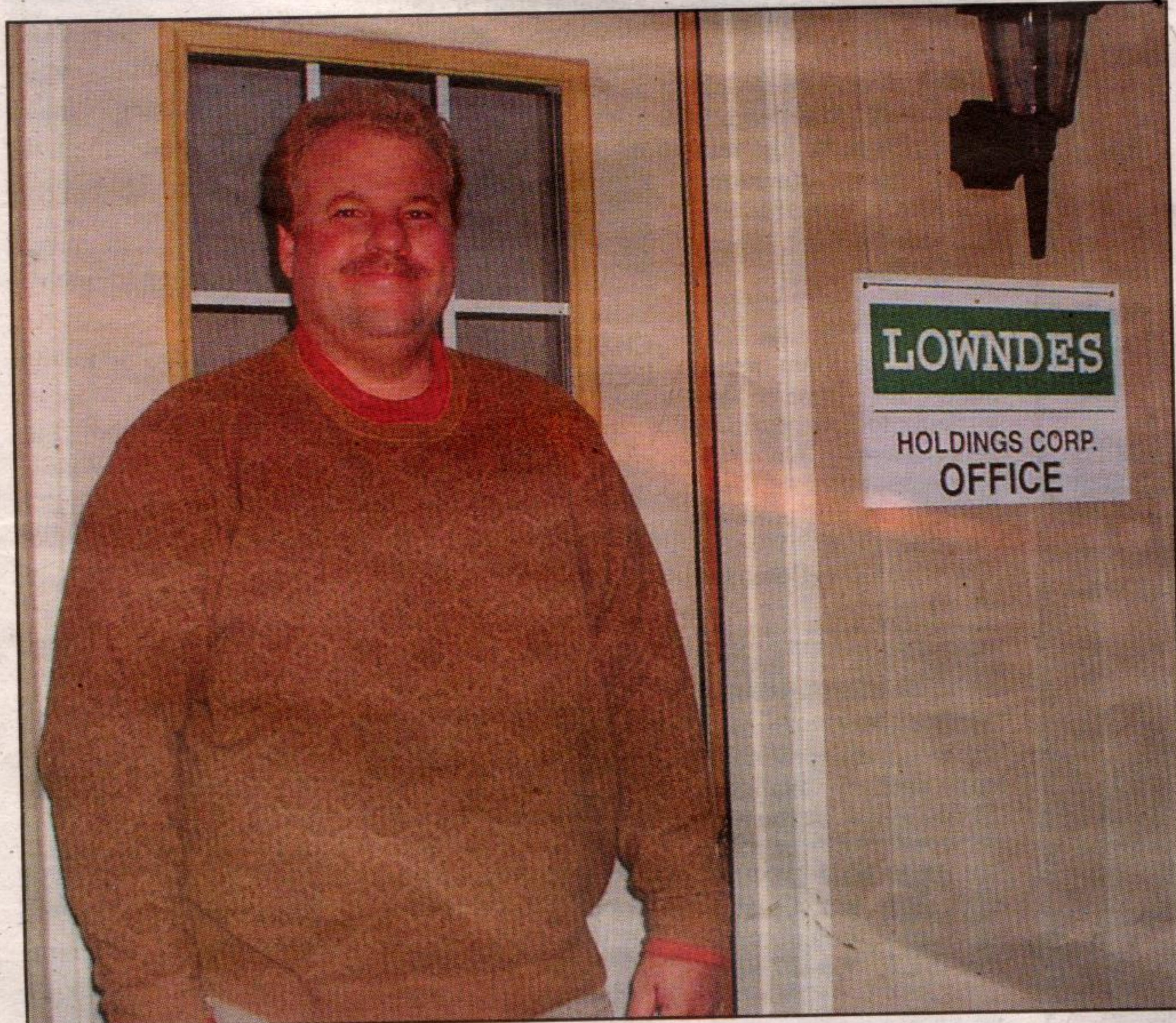


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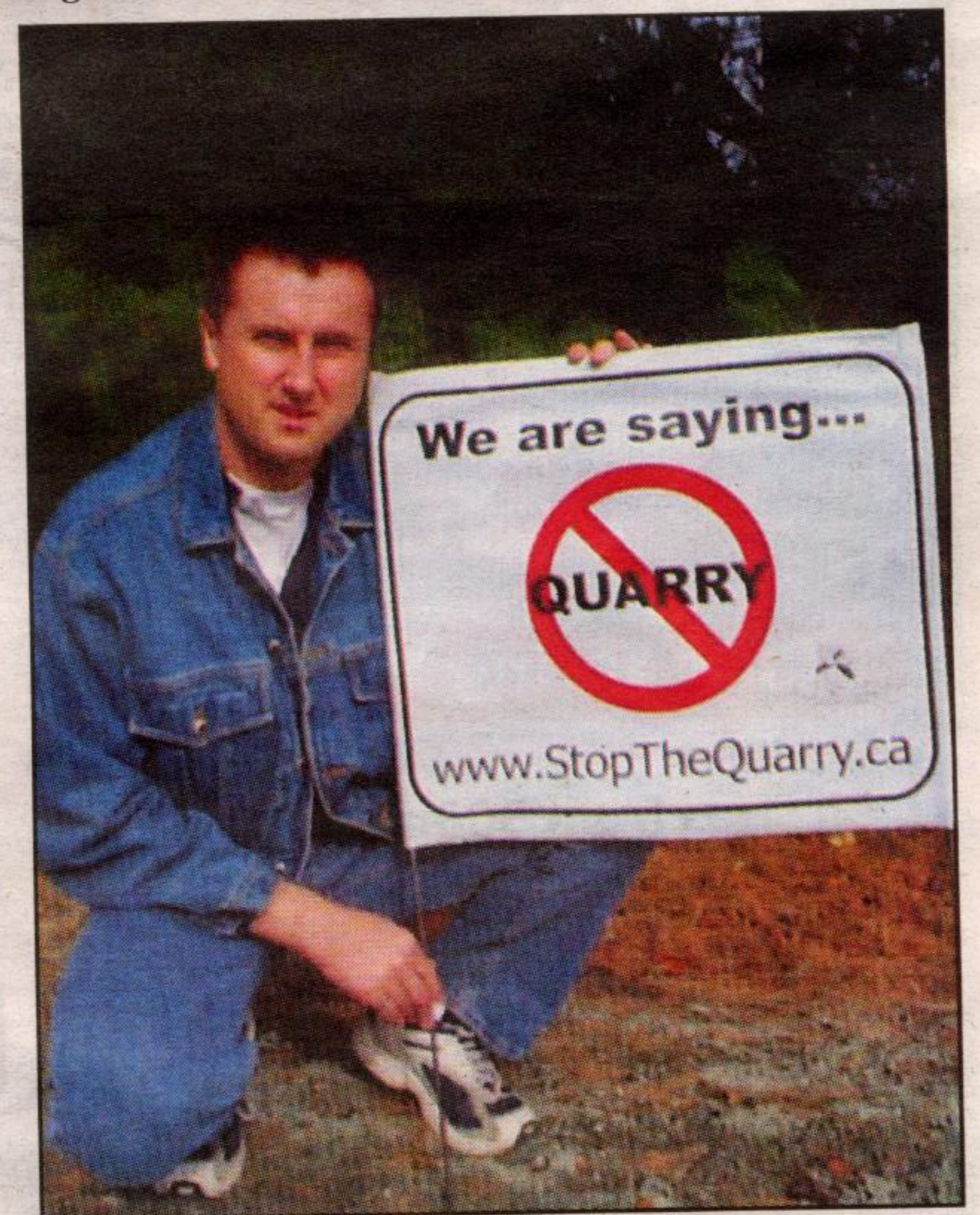
For additional show information contact: Huttonville Lions Club, P.O. Box 61, Huttonville LOJ 1B0

Proceeds Support Community Projects



By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

David Lowndes' company, Lowndes Holdings Corp., is hoping to develop a limestone quarry in Flamborough near 11th Concession and Milborough Line. Mr. Lowndes says limestone is a valuable mineral that is increasingly in short supply. The site in Flamborough is rich in limestone that has a high magnesium content, making it stronger in quality than other types of limestone.



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Graham Flint is the spokesperson and chairman for FORCE or Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment. Since June the group has been fighting a proposal to build a quarry in Flamborough near the 11th Concession and Milborough Line. The group is the lead organization fighting the proposal, but it does work in partnership with the Milton Rural Residents Association (MRRRA).

be reached at 905-659-5417. The website is www.StopTheQuarry.ca. Lowndes Holdings Corp. is located at 515-11th Concession Road East. The company holds an open house every Thursday from 2 pm to 8 pm. The phone number is 905-659-5524.