

film review

By LAURA COOK

The Flight Of The Phoenix



This movie is a remake of a 1965 original directed by Robert Aldrich and starring Jimmy Stewart as a veteran pilot who is pushed off course and crashes a planeload of oil-rig workers in a remote African desert. They have little water or food and no hope of being rescued after their plane crashes. Although the previous story's setting changes to the Gobi desert and the star is now Dennis Quaid, much of the story remains the same in this 2004 version of *Flight Of the Phoenix*.

Captain Frank Towns (played by Quaid) is sent to transport a field crew out of their drilling operation in Mongolia after it has been shut down. While many are reluctant to go with him after learning that they have lost their jobs, a strange man shows up at the last moment requesting a ride back to civilization and is let aboard. As the plane flies into an enormous sandstorm, this intellectual stranger informs the captain that his plane is much too heavy to reach a safe altitude over the storm. Disobeying his suggestions, Captain Towns ignores the advice and consequently crashes the plane in the middle of the Gobi desert.

While many of the scenes are very obviously done digitally, such as the plane crash and many sandstorms, the lack of character interaction is what throws off the dynamic that made the original film such a hit. Between the numerous songs being played on a character's ipod™ and the consistent scenes of the characters rebuilding the airplane, there isn't a lot of room left for audiences to witness the brutality of the desert. When the team gets the rebuilt plane off the ground just in time to escape a tribe of nomads who look like Genghis Khan and his hard-riding horde, there just isn't that collective relief that comes in the older version of the film.

Although this film is rated PG-13, for some language, action and violence, it is less scary than a bad episode of the television show *Survivor*™.

Lowndes' quarry proposal generated a lot of debate in 2004

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

A controversial proposal to develop one of the largest limestone quarries in Canada generated a lot of public debate this year. And it's likely we can expect more debate on the project in 2005 as the first of a series of public consultations begins concerning the proposal.

Since June, when David Lowndes Holdings Corp. first announced its plans to develop an open-pit limestone quarry, there has been opposition to the project, notably from a group known as Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment (FORCE). If the quarry is approved, it will become the eighth largest quarry in Canada, and one of the top five largest limestone quarries in the country.

According to a report issued by Halton Region, the quarry is expected to produce three million metric tons of dolostone limestone, a high-grade limestone, for the next 25 to 30 years. That works out to an average of 15,000 tonnes per day, 200 days per year. The overall yield is estimated at 80 million tonnes, with an average of 450 one-way truck trips per day or 900 two-way trips passing near or through Halton Region, with the "average maximum per day being 570 one-way truckloads." The preferred haul routes include portions of Milborough Line, Campbellville Road, Twiss Road or Reid Sideroad and Guelph Line.

The quarry lies within the boundaries of the City of Hamilton in Flamborough, close to the 11th Concession and Milborough Line. However, the proximity of the site to Halton Region has raised concerns among residents outside Flamborough. Members of FORCE, which is a citizen-based advocacy group, represent supporters in a number of communities, including Campbellville, Kilbride, Mountsberg, Freelon, and Carlisle.

Halton Region has been closely monitoring the proposal, according to Helma Geerts, a senior planner with the region. "Regional staff will review the technical reports and hold a public meeting sometime in the New Year to focus specifically on Halton issues."

Lowndes' application was accepted for review by the City of Hamilton earlier this month and it outlines a plan to develop 238 acres of a 380-acre site as an aggregate quarry. David Lowndes, who owns the company, has stated that the quarry will provide much needed limestone that can be used for concrete and asphalt and that the project will be carefully monitored. According to Lowndes Holdings, top grade limestone aggregate is expected to run out in Ontario by 2010 if no new licences are issued.

However, there are local residents who hope to stop the proposal, saying it will adversely affect the area. Graham Flint, as the spokesperson for FORCE, says his members have expressed concerns about the closeness of the project to three residential developments, the amount of truck traffic the quarry will generate, and the potential impact on the water table. During an interview in October, Mr. Flint said his members were "flabbergasted" that the site "directly intersects the flow of water." "We are very worried about the water. There is an aquifer (on the property) that feeds

Carlisle wells."

Halton Region, which will act as a commenting agency on Lowndes' application, drafted a report that was submitted to Halton Chair Joyce Savoline and the planning and public works committee in October. As noted in the report, the Region plans to work with the City of Hamilton to study the application. But meetings are also planned with other groups concerned with the project. The report states that the Region of Halton, Town of Milton, City of Burlington, and Conservation Halton staff "will review the information submitted in detail, exchange information, and make submissions (potentially jointly) to the City of Hamilton, the approval authority on the Planning Act applications, and to the Ministry of Natural Resources, the approval authority on the aggregate licence application."

To go ahead with its proposal, Lowndes Holdings Corp. needs approval for a change in the Flamborough Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw. The land, which is currently designated as Rural, would need to be redesignated as Extractive Industrial under the Official Plan. And a change would also be required to the zoning bylaw from Agricultural and Conservation Management to Extractive Industrial.

Lowndes Holdings Corp. is no longer holding open houses at its offices at 515-11th Concession Road East. However, people can still contact the company at 905-659-5524. FORCE can be reached at 905-659-5417. The website is www.StopTheQuarry.ca.



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ADVERTISING MANAGER
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