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Should read: 79.99

We sincerely regret any inconvenience we may have caused you.

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If you witness breaking news, please contact The Champion newsroom at (905) 878-2341, ext. 234. Thank you in advance.

# Region holding off on making decision on quarry expansion

*Planning committee wants environmental information before making decision*

By ANGELA BLACKBURN  
Special to The Champion

Halton Region won't make a final decision until the fall on Dufferin Aggregates' plan to expand its quarry in Milton and Halton Hills.

The Region wants further information about four environmental areas within the proposed expanded quarry — areas Dufferin offi-

cially say they'll argue to include.

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has yet to file an opinion on the areas in question, and water management issues must also be ironed out.

After hearing from half a dozen delegations Wednesday, councillors on Halton's planning and public works committee agreed to numerous stipulations upon which they'll base their final decision in the fall.

They also agreed that the decision, expected in September, will be made at an evening meeting so members of the public can more easily attend.

In January 2001, Dufferin applied to amend Halton Region's Official Plan so that zoning of agricultural rural, escarpment rural and greenlands could be changed to mineral resource extraction area in some areas to allow for an expanded quarry.

Dufferin wants to extend the quarry 82.5 hectares (205 acres) to the north — 35.5 hectares in Milton (the West Extension) and 47 hectares in Halton Hills (the East Extension). Of the nearly 83 hectares, 70 hectares would be used for extraction.

Beside the Region, Dufferin also needs approval from the towns of Milton and Halton Hills, as well as the MNR and the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC).

### Council addressing matter

At press time yesterday afternoon, the Dufferin plan was to be considered by the two town councils last night. Conservation Halton's board of directors will address the plan at its meeting Thursday night. No NEC date has yet been set.

The Region wants to look at a few more issues before signing off on Dufferin's request. It wants to formally hear from the MNR. It also wants to further study several environmental areas within the expansion site and it wants to give Conservation Halton time to iron out an "in perpetuity" plan to manage the area's water system.

By 2063, Dufferin envisions excavation work will have created a series of lakes that will be refilled with water and could ultimately be used by the public as an environmental site.

That's not new to Dufferin, which currently encourages public, environmental use of the lands surrounding its quarry operation.

Dufferin has been in business in Milton since 1962, but its current 468-hectare excavation operation will be exhausted within five years.

Dufferin officials said its quarry provides the best quality aggregate in the province — from the best GTA transportation — and the company is eager to continue its work.

However, the site is surrounded by provincially-significant wetlands and life science areas that will require a water management plan.

The expanded site also includes a quartet of what Regional planner Ho Wong called "significant natural features" that the Region says should be kept out of excavation.

They include two wetlands, a habitat to the nationally threatened Jefferson Salamander species as well as a life science area.

### GTA needs aggregate

At the same time, a Province of Ontario policy statement recognizes the GTA's need for 60 million tonnes of aggregate annually for the next 25 years as the GTA population expands by 2.2 million people (or 46 per cent).

Dufferin hopes to extract 26 million tonnes of stone from the Milton extension between 2007 and 2013; and another 35 million tonnes from the Halton Hills extension between 2013 and 2020.

"At the end of the day, it is a decision balancing the importance of aggregate resources and Halton's obligation to supply such against the protection of the natural environment," stated a report from Halton Planning and Public Works Commissioner Patrick Murphy.

While Dufferin continues to collect evidence as to why the four natural features should be included in the excavation site, the Region says it will only consider backing away from protecting them based on word from the MNR. In the meantime, the summer will be used to further iron out agreements with Dufferin on the issues of water management and environmental protection.

## Open house at quarry

A day of pony rides, hikes and food.

Dufferin Aggregates will host an open house and breakfast at its Milton Quarry on Dublin Line Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon.

Kids will be able to enjoy pony rides, air brushing, birds of prey demonstrations, Bruce Trail hikes and quarry tours.

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