

Taxpayers won't have to foot bill for indexing change

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the end of a long day, much of the earlier part of the session was marked by contentious debate and an atypically snide tone in comments among council members.

The debate originated from a Regional committee's recommendation to suspend temporarily the 9.1 per cent indexing of development charges (DC) until October. A litany of representatives from Halton's building industry spoke to council asking them to pass the measure, noting the amount of layoffs they have enacted at their companies due to the recession.

However, Oakville representatives Burton

and councillors Tom Adams and Allan Elgar expressed concern that would equate to a subsidy of the development industry.

Early this week, going by communication given to them by Regional staff, Oakville councillors Tom Adams and Allan Elgar sent out emails to their constituents telling them by not indexing, the Region was facing a \$3.3 million shortfall which would have to be paid for by existing taxpayers through a 1.6 per cent increase in property taxes. About 500 responses from angry constituents were received, said Regional Chair Gary Carr, who was copied on the emails.

Halton Hills Regional Councillor Jane

Fogal said the information in the email simply wasn't true and a tax increase was not guaranteed. Colleague Clark Somerville agreed and said the Oakville councillors were misleading the public through wrongly worded emails.

"What was sent out in an email is like saying, 'Do you still beat your dog?' Somerville said. 'There isn't anybody who will respond in favour to the way it was worded.'"

If council had passed the resolution to postpone indexing, it would have had no effect on property taxpayers, agreed Carr.

According to the DC Act, a growth-related project such as a new road or water treatment plant expansion is paid in full through development charges. If the Region ever faces a shortfall in the amount of money it collects from developers and the actual project cost, that debt-plus-interest is paid back by future developers when DC rates are set in the future, development lawyer Lynda Townsend said yesterday.

"I couldn't see how any shortfall would be picked up by the property taxpayer," Townsend said, adding the situation is the

same if a municipality foregoes indexing.

Milton council followed a similar assessment by staff when it voted Monday to endorse a staff recommendation to not index its own DC by-law, as it is already preparing a new one for June.

Milton's treasurer said there would be no burden on the taxpayer.

"The funds that are not collected will simply roll forward and be taken into consideration as new DC rates are set," explained Linda Leeds.

However, regional staff's understanding of the issue is different, though it said a tax increase is not the inevitable result.

"If the Region decided not to collect the indexing amount, any shortfall should be funded from other sources, such as taxes," said Jane MacCaskill, Halton's Commissioner of Corporate Services.

"However we would work to minimize the impact on taxpayers through adjustments in the capital program."

Tim Foran can be reached at tforan@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Aggregate Resources Act Form 1 – Notice of Application for a Licence

I, St. Marys Cement Inc. (Canada) 55 Industrial Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4G 3W9

Hereby, give notice that application has been made for a Category 2, Class A licence to excavate aggregate from a Pit and Quarry of 158.13 hectares, located in Lots or Part lot(s) 1-3, Concession 11, Geographic Township East Flamborough, Local Municipality City of Hamilton.

Application is for a new pit or quarry.

Annual Tonnage Condition applied for is 3,000,000 tonnes.

A detailed site plan and report(s) for the proposal may be examined at the local or county/regional municipal offices or at the district/local office of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Any person(s) wishing to object to this application must send, in writing, their objection with reason(s) to the **Applicant** and to the district/local office of the **Ministry of Natural Resources** at the addresses below. Note: E-mail submissions are acceptable however they must contain the objector's complete postal mailing address where a response can be delivered. **E-mail objections which do not contain a postal address will not be considered acceptable.**

The Applicant: St. Marys Cement Inc. (Canada), 55 Industrial Street Toronto, Ontario M4G 3W9 or by email to communityinfo@stmaryscbm.com

and

MNR: Guelph District, 1 Stone Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2 or by e-mail to MNRFQA@ontario.ca

The last day on which objections may be filed with the Applicant and Ministry is: the 21st day of May, 2009.

Note: All information in respect to this application including written objections, the names and address of any objector(s) is available for public review for the purpose of this application under the Aggregate Resources Act. In submitting a written objection an objector consents under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act to its disclosure for purposes of the application.

Pour renseignements en français, composer 905-294-8282.

Aggregate Resources Act Form 2 – Notice of Public Information Session

I, St. Marys Cement Inc. (Canada) 55 Industrial Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4G 3W9

Hereby, give notice that a Public Information Session will be held on:

April 27, 2009 at 4 pm – 9 pm

at the Waterdown Legion Hall

79 Hamilton St. North, Waterdown, Ontario L0R 2H0

The purpose of the Information Session is to present, to the public, the details of the application for a Category 2, Class "A" licence below water table, to excavate aggregate from a new pit and quarry.

The location of the proposed Pit and Quarry is Lots or Part lot(s) 1-3, Concession 11, Geographic Township East Flamborough, Local Municipality City of Hamilton.

Pour renseignements en français, composer 905-294-8282.




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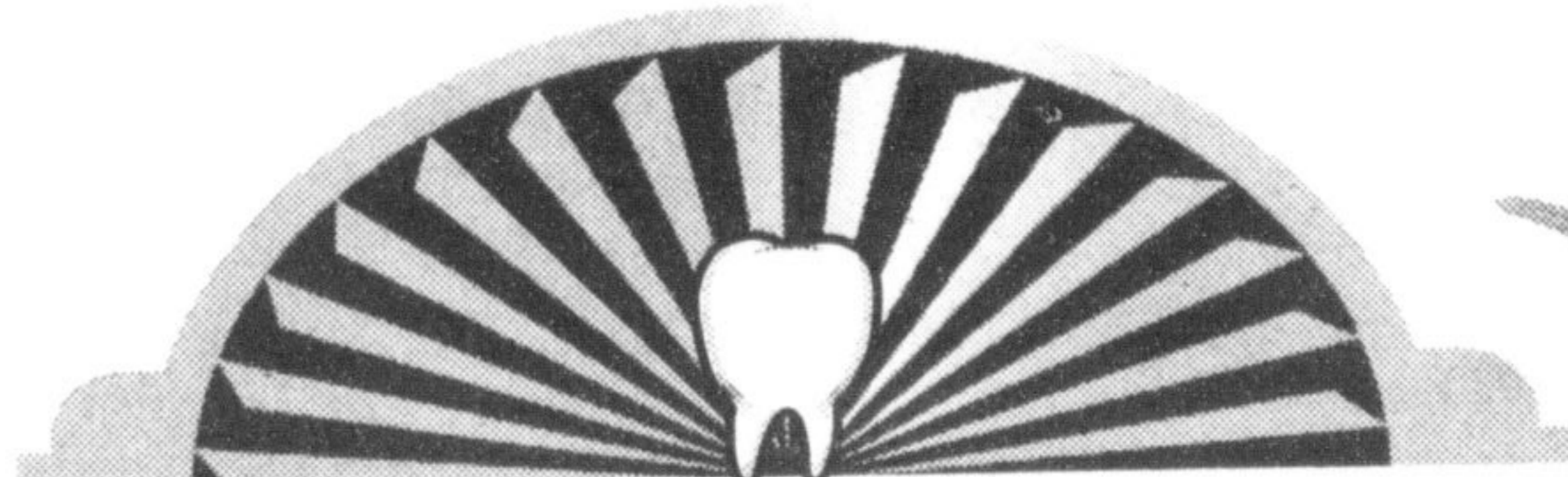
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