

Bulletin #21 December 2014



**October municipal election:
will anything change?**

During this year's October municipal election many citizens, including aggregate activists, strongly voiced their objection to what they considered inadequate political representation by elected officials.

More than one candidate challenging the status quo stated emphatically that he or she - if elected - would give voice on council to citizen's views and concerns. In Caledon three Regional incumbents were voted out of office and replaced by their challengers.

On December 4th at 10am at Caledon Town Hall the OMB will hold a Prehearing to begin the review of the

proposal on which Caledon's previous Council made its decision to grant Olympia Sand and Gravel amendments facilitating a licence for the proposed Melville Pit. This decision was handed down over the objections of Caledon residents who are deeply concerned about their water supply and other social and environmental impacts. They had asked for more comprehensive and up to date tests. CAMP, a citizen organization, is leading the challenge. [For background information link here](#)

Only Ward 1 Area Councillor Doug Beffort voted to withhold the amendments. He won his re-election with a healthy majority and has been joined by Barb Shaughnessy, newly elected Ward 1 Regional Councillor who ran a strong and persuasive campaign on the promise that she would represent her constituents views in future votes.

Many subscribers to this Bulletin and visitors to our website are currently preparing for their own challenges to inappropriate pits that are being proposed in their areas. Auditing the review process that others are engaged in - at hearings, municipal councils and tribunals - offers us an opportunity to learn what lies ahead and to support fellow citizens in their struggle. When your municipality refuses to support your opposition to a pit or quarry, you need all the help you can get.

The Social Licence to operate

Citizens who challenge new mining operations tend to concentrate on the legalities of the licencing process and the ambiguities present in aggregate legislation.

However over the past 15 years the mining industry has come to recognize that in order to operate successfully in communities where it extracts natural resources - free, prior and informed consent must be obtained from area residents. This has come to be known as obtaining a 'Social Licence to Operate' [SLO]. The term originates in the mining industry and is now used extensively by industry and government as "the key driver for Corporate Social Responsibility" - another term that comes from the boardroom.

What is free, prior and informed consent?

“Consent must be freely given and not coerced, and it must be obtained prior to significant project decisions. Communities must be fully informed, with access to accurate and comprehensive project-related economic, social, and environmental information. Companies must also provide communities with time and access to the technical expertise necessary to acquire a complete understanding of project impacts and benefits. Companies must acknowledge that communities have the right to withhold their consent.”

[“Sustainability Perspectives - Briefing Notes for the C-Suite”, Ethical Funds publication]

Municipal Councils that limit themselves to legalities miss the opportunity to engage the mining industry in an exercise that more fully serves the interests of the community.

Caledon Main Pit, Limebeer Site - new Lafarge proposal

In his submission to the Standing Committee reviewing the ARA in 2012, Bruce Semkowski, then Vice-President of Aggregates in Eastern Canada for Lafarge Canada (now president of The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation, TOARC) said:

“We also place a great amount of importance in our company on working hard with community leaders, non-governmental organizations and concerned citizens. We know first-hand how important it is to engage with members of the communities where we’re located, and we try to be as proactive as possible in communicating and consulting with them on initiatives.

It goes without saying that even though we may have the operational licence to work in a community, maintaining our social licence to operate is just as vital.

We need the ongoing support of those communities where we work, and the only way we maintain that support is through ongoing community and stakeholder engagement.”

Lafarge (Caledon) has applied for an extension to its licence to mine aggregates in a property next to one that it has been working for years. It’s the Limebeer site on McLaren Road and Charleston.

Permissions for extensions have a bad reputation in Ontario for being easier to get than original site licences: they don’t even have to meet the somewhat inadequate criteria for those original applications. Lafarge has set what looks like a high bar for itself.



Thank you for your support, donations, emails and updates throughout the year. We couldn’t do this without you.

On behalf of the President and Board of REDC our very best wishes for the Festive Season ahead.

Christine Shain, REDC Communications and Strategy

Contact REDC at info@peopleforcaledon.com

Please address cheques to REDC Inc.

Mail to REDC Inc. Att: Treasurer,

17895 Heart Lake Road, Caledon Ontario L7K 2A3

Please be assured your e-mail or postal information will not be shared and will be used solely to update you on REDC activities. Thank you for your support of our common interest in our natural heritage and opposition to the McCormick Pit. If you wish to have your name removed from the update list please send your request to info@peopleforcaledon.com