

Residents mount campaign following Tribunal decision

By Mark Pavilons

Snowball residents are mounting a campaign to mitigate the impacts of a local aggregate company.

The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (formerly OMB) recently granted the appeal by Brock Aggregates for a building expansion on their property in the hamlet. The decision paves the way for the company to build a 25,631-square foot building for storage.

Local opponents are not giving up without a fight. They received some support from King councillors, who decided Monday night to ask for legal advice to see if there's any cause for an appeal of the Tribunal decision.

Residents, led by Sher St. Kitts, are hoping to appeal the LPAT decision, but time is running out. St. Kitts noted they have just 30 days to appeal, but they're not a large organization with big resources to stage a fight.

"We need the chance to appeal," she said. "We represent Ontario citizens, residents? Our rights to enjoyment of our land and property are being taken away by this aggregate."

St. Kitts argued they are just "regular citizens" trying to enjoy their properties and life in this hamlet.

"We do not have deep pockets or groups of experts nor a team of lawyers. We also deserve a fair tribunal hearing, which we feel we did not receive. This is a David and Goliath situation in the hamlet."

An appeal is possible but must happen fast and Snowball residents are asking King council "to continue to stand with us and see this through by appealing this decision."

She contends the roads cannot accommodate the increased truck traffic this project will generate. She also believes the Township can't adequately ensure the company complies with rules surrounding noise and dust.

The Township originally refused the company's application back in 2016.

Snowball residents, some of whom attended the Tribunal hearing, had hoped the Township "would have our backs," and they did not provide any additional "experts" to testify.

"Why were our testimonies ignored in the decision?" she asked. "This is a land use proposal not a moment for Ontario Government to push its love of aggregates. They just do not belong in Snowball, or residential uses cannot be here with them."

St. Kitts wants to know whether the Province, King Township, or the company compensate local residents for the potential loss of property.

"Soon we will become extinct here as we cannot live in the dust, noise and nuisance of the activities of this aggregate. This is so wrong," she said.

The only protection, she admits, would be vigilant, significant daily monitoring of aggregates, land uses and activities. However, she feels the Township lacks resources and manpower to monitor such daily activities, as evidenced over the past 20 years.

Residents have suffered dust clouds, noisy trucks, loaders and traffic jams.

"With a small population it's hard for Snowball residents to have a voice or be seen as important in the scale of things. People are discounted for industry."

"If this can be allowed in Snowball, then it can happen in your front yard," she warned.

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