

WESTHAVEN DRIVE QUARRY EXPANSION - LETTER TO FRAN

Fran Fendelet,

Like most Tyandaga residents, I have been bombarded with alarming information on how the expansion of the Brick Manufacturing Quarry expansion is going to negatively affect the home owners on Westhaven Drive. This situation initially arose when home buyers in this subdivision became aware of the Quarry Expansion. This was clearly stated in the description of these properties, but they had not read this document before purchasing. So now a few home owners devised a plan to have the Quarry Expansion blocked as there was no legal way of defaulting on their purchases.

The plan was to claim that the excavation machine noise in the clay reclamation process would be a serious reduction in the enjoyment of their homes. Then to, just seeing this enlarging clay Quarry would certainly decrease their real estate investment, as well as their enjoyment of their view from their properties.

About two years ago, I walked back to Westhaven Drive with a home owner. As I walked into his backyard I noticed that there was a BERM well past his lot line, and this BERM was higher than the house roof eaves troughs. (A BERM is a man-made hill of earth) In addition there were closely spaced evergreen Spruce Trees, about 25 feet high, on top of this BERM. These trees provide an additional unbroken sight barrier to anything past the BERM which of course includes the Quarry activities. So now the claim that the sights and sounds of the Quarry activities would negatively effect any of their enjoyment of their homes and/or real estate values was seen to be totally baseless.

I recently walked around the back of this development on Westhaven Drive and was so impressed with just how well planned and how well constructed this BERM really is. I had a conversation with a resident, who was an early home buyer and he was, and still is delighted with his home and the location. He advised me that Branthaven Homes, who developed this subdivision, trucked in the soil to create the BERM to the height of the house roofs. Branthaven Homes also planted the evergreen trees to further block the view past this BERM.

As I have owned a Branthaven Home that was built in 1975, I can tell everyone that the reputation and history of Branthaven Homes exceed all building code requirements and these many, many Tyandaga residents appreciate the dedication to quality and advanced planning considerations that went into their homes.

So now, back to the campaign to alarm not just the Westhaven Drive home owners of this impending calamity that the Quarry Expansion will be. But when the operating sounds of excavation are entirely blocked by the BERM as well as any view of the Quarry, has been totally debunked, then it's time to clarify the facts to the area residents. But wait a minute, this group will now be faced with their loss of reputation since of course the loss of real estate values is just not happening. So, stopping the Quarry expansion is then focused on the removal of 9000 trees, as if building any real estate subdivision doesn't do just that, as does building a highway or a new street. But honestly, 9000 trees! walked around these 25 acres in question, where the Quarry expansion will use part of, and if mature trees with large canopies are what is counted, then 9000 trees is absurd. If trees that are less than one meter tall then the numbers are higher. But as we know it is the leaves that remove carbon dioxide from the air and put out oxygen, and that is the domain of mature trees. This campaign has never been balanced view but has bordered on Hysteria.

So, what now? For those people who want to see for themselves, there is a very clear trail bordering these homes, that can be accessed at the edge of the Hydro property. This trail goes past the Quarry side of the BERM at which point, like everyone else they will be impressed that it is conclusive that any sight or sounds of existing Quarry activities moving somewhat closer will never impact Westhaven Drive residents. For the people involved in this ill-considered campaign to stop Quarry expansion should be ashamed of your selves, for creating an environment of panic to home owners causing them to sell such desirable properties. It is well past the time when this organization should issue emails and schedule a meeting to apologize to everyone for such misleading claims. For the municipal politicians, to not provide the facts, vigorously denouncing these claims as being without merit is either exposing them for their lack of basic knowledge or exposing their willingness to grasp anything, no matter how absurd, as long as it means keeping their elected jobs, by pandering for votes.

Now when we consider that this Quarry supplies a quality product (bricks), to the home builders and almost all quality homes use bricks in their architectural design and construction. Anyone that has travelled across Canada knows that bricks are not used in the maritime provinces or western provinces as these areas lack the clay that is sourced in this Quarry. It is certainly not a matter of telling the owners to relocate to Northern Ontario for example as there is no clay there. This clay soil is an asset for Ontario and ending this industry is a very narrow-minded approach, not the more Provincial or National benefit that is the current situation and should continue to be.

Garry Milne