

# Company appeals quarry ruling

The application by St. Marys Cement will now go before the Ontario Municipal Board

BY MICHAEL-ALLAN MARION  
Ontario Farmer

Carlisle - Multinational aggregates firm St. Marys Cement is appealing a provincial government order halting its controversial bid to build a limestone quarry in a farming area northeast of the village of Carlisle.

St. Marys, a Toronto-based subsidiary of a Brazilian multinational, has filed an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board an unprecedented order by Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Jim Bradley that quashed the company's application to the Ministry of Natural Resources for a license to establish a quarry on a 150-acre parcel of agricultural land on 11th Concession Road East near Milborough Line.

Graham Flint, chairman of the grassroots group Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment, was "disappointed but not surprised" at news of the appeal.

"They continue to be isolated in their belief that this is an appropriate development," he said of the company in an interview.

Flint noted that for the past four years the application has been opposed by federations of agriculture, community stakeholder agencies, residents, several neighbouring municipalities, school boards and public health officers, and is viewed skeptically by the Ministry of the Environment.

"They are all telling them that's not the place to put that quarry, but they seem determined to fight on and see it through. They're standing all alone. Everyone said no, but they don't seem to have gotten the message," he said.

"I'm a bit disappointed that it's going to become a waste of taxpayer resources to fight this appeal because the facts won't change."

St. Marys vice-president John Moroz says the company will continue to fight for its application, and will not accept it being short-circuited by the order, after spending \$20 million so far on the effort.

"As we have stated before, St. Marys was surprised and disappointed by this unprecedented decision and we believe the Ontario government

has made a grave error," he said in a statement.

"Our application was making its way through the rigorous provincially and municipally mandated processes and we believe - if the project is assessed on its merits - it will ultimately be approved."

By procedure, Bradley must refer the company's appeal to the OMB. Government officials are weighing the merits of another move to declare the site of provincial interest. But it must do so no less than 30 days before a hearing.

FORCE's 1,200 members, including about 250 farmers, had several concerns about the application since it was brought forward in 2006. Neighbouring livestock, equestrian, cash-cropping and greenhouse operators and residents in the village were concerned about the quarry's impact on the area's groundwater and significant wetlands.

They were also concerned about noise and dust from the operation, and threats to road safety from the constant truck

traffic associated with a major quarry.

The group organized with money, a sign campaign and periodic rallies, successfully lobbied area municipalities, and sent in letters of objection when the formal licence application and review process began.

After Bradley delivered his order, FORCE held a community celebration at the Carlisle Golf and Country Club.

"It was good to see the community in an upbeat mood after years of worry," said Flint, "but realize there is more to go before this is over."

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