

Shantz Station Pit UPDATE

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A newsletter for the community about the proposed Shantz Station Pit

AGRICULTURAL PEER REVIEWER SATISFIED

A consultant working for the Region of Waterloo to conduct a peer review of Capital Paving's Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) for the proposed Shantz Station Pit have indicated they are in agreement that the lands can be successfully returned to an agricultural condition and that the pit application will be consistent with agricultural policies.

In particular, the peer reviewer has agreed that the application meets the requirements of the Ontario Government's Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Waterloo Region's Official Plan and Woolwich Township's Official Plan – which all allow for mineral aggregate extraction in prime agricultural areas, providing the site is rehabilitated back to an agricultural condition.

The peer reviewer originally made 29 recommendations which he said included “some gaps and improvements to the AIA which in our opinion should be addressed before a decision on approval of the proposed pit can be made.” These included some revised wording to the AIA, clarification of some of the information provided and additional details to be included.

Among the peer reviewer's recommendations were that alternative sites for the pit be explored and a justification be provided for the need for sand and gravel to outweigh the possible impacts.

Capital's consultants responded that there are no non-prime agriculture areas within Woolwich Township that could accommodate viable aggregate extraction. They also noted that the PPS requirement to explore alternative sites only applies to below water table extraction – where rehabilitation to an agriculture condition is not feasible – and not to above water table extraction, as proposed at the Shantz Station Pit.

As for the need for the aggregate resources, Capital's consultants explained that the PPS does not require that need be justified. However, they did provide additional information about the need for aggregates to support the anticipated growth in the Waterloo Region and Guelph areas.

In response to all 29 recommendations, Capital's consultants provided further explanation and justification for their assessment, while also providing additional information – including changes to the AIA report and site plans – to the satisfaction of the peer reviewer.

Of particular note, the peer reviewer was satisfied with information and site plan notes which indicate that the final rehabilitated pit floor will remain at least 1.5 metres above the water table. The reviewer was also satisfied with Capital's plans to progressively rehabilitate 96% of the extraction area back to agriculture with the same average soil capability as before.

The Agricultural Impact Assessment report, peer review, and correspondence between the peer reviewer and Capital's consultants are available for public viewing on the Shantz Station Pit website, www.shantzstationpit.com

Members of the community who have questions or concerns about the proposed Shantz Station Pit are invited to call or email project manager George Lourenco, whose contact information is listed below.