

Wednesday August 26th, 2009

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BridgeKeepers seek full disclosure. Want access to all gravel pit documents

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By Gail Martin Independent Editor



Members of the BridgeKeepers group are pushing Woolwich Council for a full disclosure of all communication between the township and Capital Paving.

The request was discussed at the Aug. 11 council meeting. John Fielding, co-chairman of BridgeKeepers, had sent a letter to council, outlining the request.

BridgeKeepers is a group that is opposing Capital Paving's application for a large gravel pit in the West Montrose area.

In his letter, Fielding noted that the Aggregate Resources Act requires "opportunities for public consultation on decisions that are transparent and fair for all affected participants."

Fielding went on to say, "we expect that same assurance of consultation and transparency applies to the municipal zoning process as much as it does to the licensing process."

Fielding, in his letter, asked that the township provide copies of "all correspondence" with Capital Paving, and expressed concern over the fact that individual members of council had been advised not to meet with BridgeKeeper members, except in council chambers, "under the openness of full public exposure and disclosure."

At the Aug. 11 meeting, Woolwich CAO David Brenneman clarified the township's position.

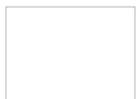
He said that, under the Planning Act, all files are "open and accessible," and available to all members of the public.

However, he added that since some of the files related to Capital Paving are related to legal matters, those files would not be available.

Brenneman also said that he was the staff member who had advised members of council not to meet with BridgeKeepers representatives, in order to avoid accusations of prejudice against members of council, since the proposed gravel pit is now part of an official planning application.

"Ultimately, members of council have to make their own decisions, but our job is to provide the best advice we can," said Brenneman, who said that in other, similar cases, "we will continue to give the same advice, that it is not appropriate."

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August 26th, 2009
Gail Martin Independent Editor

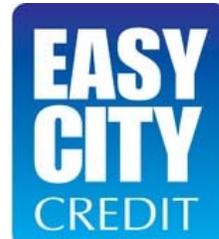
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