

Trees are to be removed in phases; replaced during quarry expansion

by John Bkila
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A spokesperson for Meridian Brick said trees targeted for removal in its plans to expand its operations east at the Aldershot Quarry will be cut in phases — and gradually replaced.

This was in response to local residents who have voiced concerns that thousands of trees in the Carolinian forested area on the subject lands are going to be clear-cut.

Meridian Brick's (formerly known as Forterra) quarry, located to the west of Burlington's Westhaven Drive, was approved decades ago (since 1972) and has plans to expand east — closer to the Tyandaga neighbourhood — to mine shale (used in clay brick production).

Patrick Kelly, a spokesperson with Meridian Brick, said the last phase of the east cell expansion (closest to the Tyandaga neighbours) would not take place for 15-20 years.

"The centre and east cells will also be progressively rehabilitated, which means that there will be 30-year-old trees from the first rehabilitation phase by the time the last rehabilitation phase takes place and all 29,000 trees are planted," he told the Post.

Expansion necessary for brick plants

The company says its expansion is necessary since its west and centre sites have a combined three to eight years of shale supply left, while its east site has approximately 25-30 years remaining.

"Thirty-eight per cent of the shale reserves are located in the east quarry," said Kelly. "These reserves are essential for the continued operation of the Aldershot and Burlington brick plants."

During a Nov. 16 community meeting hosted by the neighbourhood group Tyanda-

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Quarry operations governed by province

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-ga Environmental Coalition (TEC), Gordon Miller, former environmental commissioner of Ontario, told residents the plans that approved the quarry back in 1972 are not up to date with the environmental and "good neighbour" standards of today and it wouldn't be approved under current environmental review processes.

Site plan amended frequently

Meridian Brick says the Aldershot Quarry site plan has been amended frequently in accordance to evolving provincial regulations and standards.

"... Quarry operations are governed by two documents: a licence and a site plan — a licence is a one-page permit," noted Kelly.

"In 1995, a new site plan was approved, in accordance with the Aggregate Resources Act. Several site plan amendments were pre-

pared during the early 2000s. These plans incorporated the 1997 provincial standards; the air quality and noise control provisions of the Tyandaga West subdivision approvals; and the Greenbelt Plan," he continued.

"The current site plan was approved in August 2010. Notwithstanding this seven-year-old approval, operations are governed by current provincial regulations and standards. These regulations and standards include the Endangered Species Act, Environmental Protection Act, 2017 Greenbelt Plan, Ontario Heritage Act, Ontario Water Resources Act, and the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement."

Meridian Brick hosted a community meeting yesterday at Crossroads Centre, where it planned to update residents on its studies — including air quality and health, at-risk species, archeological and noise control.