

Clear-cutting to commence Winter 2017 / 2018!

Central to the November 29th meeting was the anticipated (and we quote from Meridian) “... *updates on all of the studies*”. Some of these studies (**Noise and Dust**) date back to 1995 and 1998, and were a necessary component in the provincial approval (Region, MOECC and MNRF) for the proposed development of the Westhaven Drive Subdivision (WHD).

However, more recently, at the instigation of the Tyandaga Environmental Coalition (TEC), other studies were also included as being necessary, namely, those for the presence of **indigenous artifacts** and for the presence of **endangered species** on the proposed quarry land.

One very important issue that arose from this and other meetings with Meridian is what they call the Operational Plan. It is the Operational Plan that defines the procedure by which the ore will be extracted from the site and hence their intended clearcutting strategy – essentially, where, when and how.

For example, in both the [Noise Study](#) (SS Wilson) and the [Dust Study](#) (AGRA) the Operational Plan is very detailed indicating precisely the position of the Work Faces, Stock Piles, the equipment used, the truck loading areas, etc. The detailing of their proposed operation was deemed to be VERY important since, according to SS Wilson, the quarrying (and we quote) “... *operation is somewhat complex in nature and modelling of the noise events include a thorough knowledge of the operations and the ability to model these noise events at various locations and phases of the site operation process*”.

Recently Meridian Brick have DRAMATICALLY changed the Operational Plan from the one that was used as the basis for the noise and dust studies, a fact that surely questions the integrity and relevance of their conclusions in the light of the ‘disclaimer’ cited in the previous paragraph!

Keep in mind that the Operational Plan is an internal Meridian document that has no legal foundation and can be changed by Meridian at any time, it is rather just one variable component used the execution of their ‘Master Plan’ - to CLEARCUT ~9,000 TREES – and it can and surely will be changed to achieve the most cost-effective way possible to achieve this goal.

It is important to note that the Noise and Dust Studies were performed by SS Wilson using theoretical mathematical predictive [modeling techniques](#) based on a now outdated Operational Plan. As mentioned, we are waiting for the promised updated Noise Study although this may be presented AFTER the announced timeframe for the tree cutting!

On another note, it appears that there has been NO official monitoring whatsoever of their quarrying operation for any particulate matter coming from the west and central quarries over at least the last 10 years, if at all, and the quarry operators have been relying totally on the official MOECC Monitoring station that is approximately 4.5KM away to the south of the quarrying operation and the relevant Tyandaga residences. This lack of dust and noise ‘policing’ is very concerning and we have no confidence that it will be rigorously and objectively enforced in the future.

In October 2017, PINCHIN, on Meridian's behalf, did perform a dust collecting exercise on the [Central Cell](#) using four 4 monitoring stations. The data collection was over a combined 4-day period – 2 days in early October and 2 days in late October which, incidentally, is hardly a statistically meaningful exercise. To further question their approach, one of the 4 monitoring stations when inspected in the 'morning after', had an 'open door' so they were unsure as to the veracity of the data and therefore did not include it in their calculations. Fortunately, the remaining three monitoring stations 'seemed' to be OK and were included in the analysis (although based upon the 'open door' scenario of one station the data integrity of the other 3 stations is questionable). According to PINCHIN, all went well with this analysis and based upon their results they concluded that the area ~750 meters and beyond (that's the approximate distance from the [Central Cell and the Westhaven Drive property line](#)) was within acceptable limits of carcinogenic particulate emissions. Incidentally, we have absolutely no way of knowing whether the data 'collection' and 'analysis' were performed in a manner that MOECC would have approved and it is clearly stated by multiple sources that any serious environmental dust study MUST be performed over an extended time-period (in the order of months) under varying conditions of weather and under different operational procedures!

The indigenous and endangered species studies are still ongoing and all we can do at this time is wait for Meridian's update ([Please see the attachment – I believe that your office also received a copy](#))

Towards the end of the meeting with Meridian and after being pressed constantly by the audience to define their intent with respect to the commencement of the east cell operation they finally announced that the clear-cutting will commence in the January – March 2018 timeframe irrespective of whether the update to the aforementioned health and ecological studies, mandated by the Region, were completed or not. They also suggested that the closet distance to the residential property line could be 30 meters which is 20 meters closer than their previous estimate of 50 meters. This is the kind of 'trickery' that Meridian use in order to placate the public, the public officials, and some of the media outlets. In the presentations on Nov 29th they continually pointed to the deforestation / property line distance as being ~160 meters neglecting to mention that this is just the 'first' of many cuts with the final cut being a COMPLETE deforestation of the area and coming within 30 meters of some households – THIS IS INTOLERABLE!

At best the meeting could best be described as Organised Confusion and at worst as being a sham designed to obtain a tick on the box that tries to propagate to the uninformed their Good Neighbor fallacy. The many questions from the audience were either not answered or their answers were so vague, off topic or convoluted so as to be meaningless. In a sentence – a very frustrating meeting that left many shaking their head in disbelief!

This Meridian contempt for proper procedure is JUST NOT ACCEPTABLE and has undoubtedly been fuelled by the apparent inaction of the Ministries (MOECC and MNRF) as well as by City Hall all of whom, in the past, have consistently stated and hidden behind the statement - "they (the quarry owners) have the license and they have the right".

The only correct solution would be to stop any quarrying operations on the east cell until ALL the studies have been professionally completed and peer reviewed by INDEPENDENT consultants; the submitted ERB has been processed; and a decision on the MZO has been made.

You are dealing with the residents' health and well-being here and it is very disheartening to hear our elected officials being so dismissive of these life-threatening concerns justifying their inaction by referring to an antiquated 1972 agreement as well as outdated, flawed, and incomplete studies many of which were prepared almost 20 years ago prior to the Subdivision development.

In our opinion, Meridian, because of their political support, do not see the need to address in an honest way these concerns.

