



# Clearview sideroad upgrade addresses safety, environmental issues

NEWS 06:00 AM by Ian Adams Wasaga Sun



Blue Mountain Watershed Trust director George Powell addresses a public meeting on a development application to upgrade the 26/27 Sideroad. - Ian Adams/Torstar

Reconstructing a Clearview Township sideroad is a matter of safety and protecting the environment. That was the position presented to a packed house in council chambers May 8, as the Niagara Escarpment Commission hosted a public meeting on an amendment to the Niagara Escarpment Plan that would allow the reconstruction of the 26/27 Sideroad. Upgrading the road to a year-round, paved thoroughfare between the 10th Line and Grey Road 31 is part of a 2012 agreement that saw Walker Aggregates receive a permit to expand its quarry west of Duntroon, and dictated the township would close and transfer a section of County Road 91 to the aggregate company and upgrade the 10th Line.



However, while the township's consulting planner on the file, Michael Wynia, emphasized the meeting was focused on the amendment, much of the discussion focused on the deal — and the broader issue of how traffic moves through that area.

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Duntroon-area resident Jim Campbell noted GPS units generally direct drivers coming from outside the region to use County Road 91, and then the 10th Line, as a route to Blue Mountain.

"What happens when (County Road) 91 closes? Where is that traffic going?" he questioned.

Don Kerr of the Blue Mountain Watershed Trust, which is challenging the township's development application for 26/27 Sideroad at the Environmental Review Tribunal, said the decision to transfer County Road 91 was done "without appropriate public consultation."

"These decisions lack legitimacy, if not legality, and therefore the upgrading of 26/27 (Sideroad) is not needed," he said. "If proper public consultation had been done, it is highly likely that the environmental consequences of upgrading 26/27 (Sideroad) would have been revealed."

According to Wynia's presentation, reconstructing the road would address several environmental issues. That includes the impact to a nearby cold water stream that harbours brook trout.

Wynia said the stream would be relocated away from the road allowance — a move that would improve the stream's health as it would no longer be subject to sediment loading from the existing gravel road.

The road's purpose would be to carry local traffic, while the closure of County Road 91 would divert through traffic — notably gravel trucks from the west that technically are not permitted to use the road as a haul route — to County Road 124.

"When you look closely at it, there are several environmental and safety issues with 26/27 (Sideroad) ... Regardless of what happens with (County Road) 91, this road has to be improved," Wynia said. "If it's not improved, the township has a huge liability."

While the road would be designed and constructed for a speed limit of 80 km/h, the posted limit would be 60. Other improvements would include culvert replacements, widening and resurfacing from gravel to



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asphalt, and reducing the vertical alignment – which currently is 14 per cent at its steepest grade.

The deadline for public comment on the township's application is the end of May. Niagara Escarpment Commission planner Nancy Mott said she expects to have a report to the commission in the fall, and the result of any decision would go to the Environmental Review Tribunal hearing; a decision in that process is likely to come in 2020.




by [Ian Adams](#)

Ian Adams is a reporter for Simcoe.com, covering community news and events throughout south Georgian Bay, and municipal councils in Collingwood and Wasaga Beach.


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