

THE LOOK OUT

JUNE 2016



"In the environment movement, every time you lose a battle it's for good, but our victories always seem to be temporary and we keep fighting them over and over again"

... David Suzuki

Much of our work regarding fill dumping in our area has focused on Mono, where we were involved in the important dumping case last year. It has been our belief that the threat of fill dumping is now approaching that of aggregate mining as a concern for our community, a threat which is magnified because increasingly aggregate mines, when their useful life is finished are becoming a prime target for dumping projects.

As expected, the pressure of dumping has continued, and now Mulum has become one of Ontario's major recipients of landfill from the south. Many of our members have seen the very large project on HW 89 at First Line East, a project featuring extensive truck traffic, large clouds of dust, and traffic safety issues. Thousands of loads of fill have been dumped on this site.

This project is the rehabilitation of a tapped out aggregate mine, and therefore falls under the auspices of the Ministry of Mines and Natural Resources (MMNR). The local Town and County governments have no input or control on the management of MMNR projects. Mulum has requested information on the testing done for contaminated soil. There has been no move by MMNR to comply with this request. MC² is considering approaching the Environmental Ombudsman for help on this. We could also look at launching a Freedom Of Information request.

Less noticed are two large dump sites on Second Line East just north of HW 89. The same issues about fill testing and MMNR control arise for these operations.

Clearly, our communities, which contain

a large number of played out aggregate mines, and will see lots more in the future, will increasingly become fill dumping targets. What we are seeing in Mulum is a forecast of the future.

Mulum has, this year, made two significant changes to its Fill Dumping By Law. Working with our colleagues at the Ontario Soil Rehabilitation Task Force (OSRTF), we have made an initial review of the new law. The changes made this year have strengthened the by law, and we will make a few suggestions for further improvements. It seems clear that as the dumping industry modifies its approaches, to better circumvent the evolving by laws aimed to control them, the process of amending our by law protection will need to be ongoing. And for as long as aggregate rehabilitation is out of the control of our local government, these bylaw modifications

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FROM DON'S DESK....

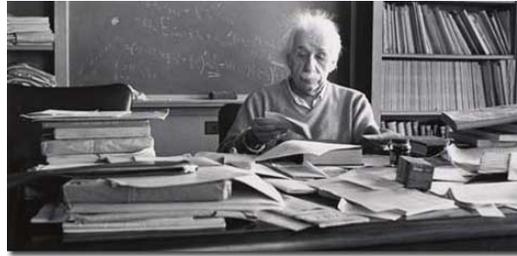
Well, summer has arrived and while we all can expect a bit of a slowdown in community activities, it seems that the range of issues we are dealing with in our communities never lets up. Without burdening our members with too much detail, I'd like to update you on a few of the priority areas that the MC² Board is monitoring.

Many of our priorities over the past year have focused on Mono, but there is a lot happening in our northern community as well. The concerns we face in Mulmur, in reality, reflect some of the major problems being faced in rural Ontario, and particularly in the counties that form a crescent around our huge metropolitan neighbor to the south.

The Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) has proposed a dramatic expansion of the area under its control. There would be a major impact on Mulmur Township, as the NEC would add about 13,000 acres to its jurisdiction. Those citizens who have worked with the NEC know that it is a burdensome and understaffed bureaucracy. It is driven by government policy; so for example, it has empowered the aggregate industry on land it controls. Local land use issues are not necessarily a priority for the NEC.

The impact of this change on Mulmur would be significant. With tax abatements available to NEC landowners, revenue of about \$800,000 (in a total budget of about \$5 million) would be shifted to non-NEC landholders. In addition, zoning issues now managed under the Mulmur Official Plan (MOP) would move to NEC control. This is a risky change, in that the Mulmur Council has generally done a solid job of managing land use under the MOP. As we know, zoning issues are often contentious, but we feel that this is an area best managed at the local level.

Mulmur, along with several other Towns/Townships, is working with the NEC to attempt to find a solution to this situation. One could wonder, in the case that the NEC plan went ahead as



If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, then what are we to think of an empty desk?

Albert Einstein

proposed, whether Mulmur could be a sustainable Township. There is plenty of detail about this situation on the Mulmur website (visit www.townshipofmulmur.com)

Also on the Mulmur front, a quick update on the Arbour Farms case. This application, to open a large aggregate mining and recycling operation on Airport Road, has been fiercely contested for about 15 years, with concerns covering a wide range of environmental, safety and neighbourhood impact issues being raised. The battle has been led by Conserve Our Rural Environment (CORE), and is now, finally coming to the hearing stage. MC² is a party in this case, but we have joined CORE's team to fight the case.

Two mediation sessions, closed to all but active Parties in the case, will be held in the summer. If these fail, the Pre-Hearing will take place on November 24-25, 2016. The full hearing is scheduled for March 27 – April 12, 2017. All public meetings will be held at the Mulmur Town Offices.

Moving on to a quick update on some important Mono issues. Mono is in the process of amending its fill dumping by law recognizing, as did Mulmur, that there is a need to keep advancing our legal

protections as the fill industry continues to grow. MC² is urging the Mono Council to provide the public with the chance to comment on the proposed new bylaw. This suggestion is in keeping with our presentation to the Mono Council, last year, to make the effort to be more engaging with the public. Our proposal on engagement and transparency is being reviewed by the Mono Research Advisory Committee (MRAC), a committee of Council. The process was delayed with the

retirement of Keith McNenly, Mono's Chief Administrative Officer and the search for and appointment of his replacement. But now discussions have resumed.

The other key emerging issue in Mono has revolved around an application to the NEC by a property owner on Airport Road to open a waterskiing event center. The initial NEC decisions in this case are being appealed by the proponent and by the Town of Mono. Many neighbours have raised concerns ranging from noise, to potential for well and stream contamination, to traffic and other concerns. Groups of both supporters and opponents are participating in the extensive discussions leading up to the hearings on the case. MC² has become a party in the case, primarily because of concerns about what are appropriate recreational uses for NEC protected land. Also, we see a need for much greater clarity on the role of the local governments and their bylaws in impacting NEC decisions which will have the potential for significant impact on our communities. These concerns become ever more relevant with the proposal of the NEC to take control of greatly increased amounts of land in our communities.

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DON'S DESK CONTINUES....

And... one other quick note. This spring, MC² looked at having a Townhall meeting on road noise. We didn't go ahead because we couldn't find the speakers we needed to make the session worthwhile. We will continue to work on this. In the meantime, one key issue appears to be to attract OPP attention to the issue. Like most public institutions, the OPP should respond to specific citizen complaints. Let's see if they do.

My suggestion is, when you see an unsafe situation on a road near you, phone the OPP detachment and ask for help and response. Their number, which works for both Mono and Mulmur, is 519-925-3838. By unsafe I mean speeding, dangerous driving, etc. This seems to be the best way to address the problems we have, summer after summer. Noise, often the outcome of speeding and other unsafe practices, is

not a priority for the OPP and is tough to deal with. But noise could be addressed through these other means. If enough people call in, we might get the type of enforcement which would reduce the problem, and which might save us from the serious accidents we witness every summer on our roads.

That's enough for now. We'll keep you informed going forward.

Have a great summer! ... Don



FRONT PAGE CONTINUED...

have limited importance.

MC² has joined the OSRTF, a group that has solid expertise in the fill dumping area. The OSRTF is actively providing input to the government study on how to better manage the fill agenda. As with many of the government responses to urban "needs", gaining control of this complex area may be beyond the ability or interest of the government; but the knowledge, effort and passion of the OSRTF has been an invaluable asset for our communities.

Fill dumping will be a critical issue for Mono and Mulmur over the next several years. One can hope that the government takes steps to address the threat of major contamination of our land and water resources, and that these steps are taken before we have to deal with a major contamination crisis.



SO.... WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON LATELY?

- On April 7th, MC² completed and submitted its incorporation renewal
- On April 9th, the Township of Mulmur held the latest of its twice yearly and very useful **Town Hall meetings**. The session was attended by over 80 citizens who heard presentations on the proposal of the Niagara Escarpment Commission to expand its control to an additional 13,000 acres of Mulmur land, an update on the work of the Economic Development Committee's work (EDC) and an opportunity for citizens to submit ideas for Mulmur's participation in Canada's 150th birthday celebrations in 2017.
- On April 30th, **MC²'s Environment Committee** hosted the latest in their series of timely and free community presentations at Monora Park. **"The Real Dirt on Dirt: Protecting and Restoring Our Soil"**, featured, among

others, Fiddlefoot Farm's Graham Corbett. Graham illustrated the primacy of our soil in sustainably growing quality food and answered plenty of questions from an engaged audience. His presentation slides are available on the MC² website as are An Update on 'The Decline of the Soil and Land' and Postscript to the Paris Climate Agreement, both documents prepared by Arnold DeGraaff, chair of the Environment Committee. Jennifer Payne, representing the Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance (HFFA)'s Farm to School Program delighted the audience with a demonstration of this program that engages elementary school children experientially in understanding how healthy food is grown and prepared. HFFA is a community initiative of Headwaters Communities in Action (HCIA).

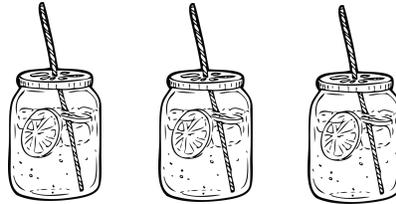
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- April/May/June – MC², as a party in the case, participated in several meetings of the NEC Tribunal addressing applications for water ski permits
- On July 28, NDACT holds its **Public Meeting and Annual General Meeting** at 7:00 PM at the Hornings Mills Village hall.
- On August 27th, **CORE's annual fundraising event** takes place featuring the talents of Jim Cuddy and many others at the beautiful Mulmur farm of Bill and Melody Duron. We will eblast information to our members about this event, and details can be found on the

CORE website (www.corecares.ca) This event deserves the full support of the community.

● **SAVE THE DATE!**

On September 24, **MC² is holding its Annual General Meeting** at the Community Hall in the Hockley Village from 10:30 AM till approximately 2:00 PM. The meeting starts at **11:00 AM sharp** followed by a picnic social.



THE LAST WORD IS OURS.... This time at least!

*"Raising awareness on the most pressing environmental issues of our time is more important than ever"
... Leonardo Di Caprio*

Yes Leo, it's what we do. It's what we've always tried to do. And the issues just keep on coming!

Thanks to the support of our dedicated membership, we've been able to continue our work in the Mono and Mulmur communities for many years. With your help, we'll be able to keep on doing so for many more.

Thank you to all our members who renewed memberships for 2016 and a

special word of gratitude to those of you who included an extra donation. We very much appreciate your ongoing commitment to MC² and your confidence in us to get the job done.

If you haven't had a chance to send in your membership renewal, we've taken the liberty of mailing you a reminder in the hope that you'll want to keep on hanging in with us as we go forward! We need all of you to make a difference.

We hope to see many of you at our Annual General Meeting on Saturday, September 24th 2016 as we review for you the the very busy year just past and where we're headed this year. Be sure to stay for a delicious lunch provided by the Hockley General Store and spend some relaxing time time with your fellow members.

YOUR COMMENTS ON THIS ISSUE OR ANY OTHER ARE WELCOMED. EMAIL US AT: INFO@MONOMULMUR.COM .

THE LOOKOUT

A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED BY
THE MONO MULMUR CITIZENS' COALITION



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