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Stop the Strada Melancthon Quarry petition launches online

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The petition is continuing the fight against the proposed Strada Quarry.

The public comment period has officially closed for Strada's quarry expansion proposal in Melancthon, but objections are still just as firm as ever, as local voices have promised to keep up the pressure on Strada and the Ontario government of Doug Ford.

Nanci Malek, a local resident and community leader opposed to the quarry development, said that just because public comments are no longer being accepted doesn't mean people should be silent.

?The reason why I put this petition out there on Dec. 12 is to keep up the pressure,? she said. ?I don't want people to forget or get complacent while Strada answers the questions that were submitted. We absolutely have to keep our voices up and going.?

Part of the urgency stems from a seemingly uninvolved provincial government. Throughout the story of the Strada quarry proposal for expansion, Malek said that multiple attempts to contact and involve the provincial government have been ignored or brushed aside. This means the community will need to forge ahead alone despite attempts to draw attention during the comment period.

?I honestly don't think the commenting period was enough to get us attention,? Malek said. ?Even if we got thousands and thousands of comments, it wouldn't be enough. I've attempted to contact Sylvia before, I've even invited her to coffee, but it's been dead silence in response.?

Despite the silence from the provincial government and its representatives, Malek said the community has received support from federal politicians, with Kyle Seeback echoing the community's concerns about the quarry project.

The reality, Malek said, is that Strada and the government don't truly understand the effect the deep quarry will have on the environment, specifically the water levels. According to local experts and third-party studies, up to half of the water flow in the Horning Mills area may be cut off or disrupted.

?On this side of the quarry, there's going to be a 50 per cent reduction in water flow,? she said. ?That is going to kill off so many species, including those already at risk like the Brook Trout, this area is their habitat, it's their breeding area.?

On dry land, the concerns continue. The quarry will naturally include more trucks on the roads, and with the speed limit through Shelburne reduced to 40 kilometres per hour, they'll be passing through even smaller roads and communities, according to Malek.

?These trucks will not go down 124 anymore because of the reduced speed limits,? she said. ?They'll be going down County Road 17 and along Prince of Wales. The speed limit is 60, and they won't be doing that. There's also a school right there. There will be much more heavy vehicle volume.?

All of these concerns, Malek feels, haven't been properly addressed by Strada or the province, despite the public comment period. This uncertainty made the petition all the more important for her to launch and encourage everyone to support.

The petition will be sent to more than just Strada or Doug Ford.

It'll be directed to Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; Tim Hodgson, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources; Dufferin?Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones, the Minister of Health; Honourable Joanne Thompson, Minister of

Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard; Julie Dabrusin, who serves as Minister of Environment and Climate Change; and Dufferin?Caledon MP Kyle Seeback.

To access, read or sign the petition, go to: win.newmode.net/stopthestradamelancthonblastingquarry/stopthestradamelancthonquarry