



SOS GSLR

This summary has been prepared by a citizen from Grenville-sur-la-Rouge who attended this event. SOS GSLR publishes this to inform those who were not able to attend. Stay tune with www.sosgslr.ca as more information will be made available in the near future.

AN INFORMATION SESSION REGARDING THE GRAPHITE MINE PROJECT IN GRENVILLE-SUR-LA-ROUGE

Saturday, October 28th, at 1:30pm, close to 200 concerned citizens reunited to attend an information session, the first of its kind in GSLR. It was organized by two citizens committed to this municipality, Mr. Andre Thérien and Mr. Normand Ethier, with the support of Jacqueline Richer, Carol Gratton and Jean Marc Gratton, which made this event a success. The invited speakers were Mr. Steven Lauzier, Project manager for Carbon Canada; Mr. Ugo Lapointe of Mining Watch Canada « Coalition pour que le Québec ait meilleure mine », as well as Maitre Anne-Julie Asselin, Lawyer specializing in environmental law.

Carbon Canada – Their point of view on the mining project

The mining project will be ongoing for approximately 20 years, with a marble quarry and a graphite mine, both of which would be considered open pit mining. The promoters forecast four sessions of dynamiting per year for a maximum extraction of 499 tons of materials daily.

According to their study, the site does not contain metals that could contaminate the environment, and the neutralizing quality of marble will simplify the water management.

Mr. Lauzier confirmed that they illegally cut some protected Sugar Maple trees (there is an ongoing investigation with the CPTAQ regarding this subject), and that there were some mining explorations done on properties, without the permission or knowledge of the actual property owners.

The concerns of such a project are the transportation (more than 50 trucks travels daily), the sound level of the mining activities, and the quality of the air and water. According to Carbon Canada, the preliminary hydrologic studies indicate that municipal wells will not be affected. [Editor's note: typically, such a project requires about 200 trucks travels a day]

This project will require an investment of \$44 million dollars and could provide approximately one hundred direct jobs.

Mining Watch Canada

Mr. Ugo Lapointe explained the 5 most critical aspects that the population is exposed to during a mining project: The mining waste, the impact on the health of the population and their quality of life (noise, dust, dynamiting, and the increase in traffic), the impact on the property values, the financial risks of the company's project, and the absence of impact studies.

Mining waste is a very important technical challenge, and will be the only lasting impact the project will leave when its operation is completed. Canada Carbon's various reports indicate different quantities, there could be between 2 and 10 million tons of accumulated waste near the site. If it is considered dry residue, this would be a better scenario as there will be less risk of contamination or spills, however, the possibility of dust and air pollution will increase. These residuals will be on high ground which poses an additional risk to the residents and vacationers.

The hydrogeologic study of the underground water veins are still to be completed, and it is premature to confirm that the project would not have an impact on the Grenville or Calumet town wells. Moreover, it is unfortunate that there have not been any impact studies carried out on the hundreds of wells owned by the residents living in close proximity to the proposed mining site. The risks of the contamination of the water table by run off are very real.

At the economic level, the stock market value of Carbon Canada has fallen 50% over the past two years, and its net debt is several million dollars, even when taking into account important credit rebates to come. The studies demonstrate that there is a correlation between financial risk and the company's ability to protect the environment, especially if the financial position of the promoter is weak.

The property values of homes near the mine tallies over \$13 million, and have already been greatly affected by this mining project.

Mr. Lapointe was very preoccupied with the fact that the promoter had not concluded agreements with all of the owners of the properties that would be affected with this project. The proposed mining site foresees activities on the properties where the owners are against this project.

The environmental standards in force date from another era and are not sufficient to adequately protect the population. According to Ugo Lapointe, the approximate \$1 million dollar financial reserve is clearly insufficient to restore the site.

In their preliminary reports, Canada Carbon claims that the daily production will be 499 tons, whereas a 500 ton / day threshold requires a detailed impact study, or even a BAPE / PEA0 (Public Environmental Auditing Office). According to Mr. Lapointe, this type of project should require a BAPE. "It's a huge disappointment that the promoter is not looking out for the best interest of the population" said Mr. Lapointe.

The intervention of Me. Asselin, lawyer specializing in environmental law

There are currently many legal recourses by the population against mining and industrial projects. Even if these companies respect the norms in force, they can be held accountable and be condemned if the impact on the citizens is negative.

[Editor's note: A class action suit against Colacem Canada Inc. by the Kilmar Road citizens was authorized recently. The impacts of noise and dust between 2008 and 2015 are the main aspects of the appeal.]

A study of the BAPE / PEA0 is essential to protect the interest of the population, and to ensure that the promoter is committed to respecting the environment. This approach allows experts to analyse the project and highlight important elements, and also allows the citizens to express their questions and concerns. Subsequently, the BAPE / PEA0 issues recommendations to establish certain conditions to which the promoter must commit to.

It is important that the population documents their current situation starting now, by taking photographs of their house foundations, by taking water samples, recording ambient noise, the visual aspect of the landscape, and so on. Neighborhood troubles are an important issue.

Concerns and a question period ... sometimes unanswered

Several citizens went to the microphone and expressed their many concerns. The question period should have lasted an hour, but actually neared 2 hours.

A farmer spoke about his land, and said he was disappointed and angry at the promoter who plans to allocate a portion of his land. He had requested a meeting with Mr. Lauzier quite some time ago, however this has not happened yet.

A resident mentioned that it was forbidden to put mining waste on land where the water table is a class 1, that is to say a closed aquifer, and Mr. Lauzier was not aware of this regulation.

A resident who is "neither for nor against" the mine, and who is part of the outgoing team of the city council said he regretted that the promoter did not submit any financial data on the mining project. Moreover, since the project will not start until 2021, he finds it is premature for the population to worry now. On this point, Mr. Lapointe mentioned that, on the contrary, the population must deal with it immediately.

A resident took it upon herself to visit the mining site of Saint-Aimé des Iles. It is currently the only operating graphite mine in Québec. According to a representative of the municipality, she found that the municipality has not developed since the mine went into operation, there have been impacts on the wells, the noise is a disturbance, and several homes are for sale. The population has hardly increased in the past 28 years since the mine was established, there have been three different owners of the mine, and that the present mine is expanding towards the village rather than ceasing its activities as planned a few years ago.

A resident living close to the proposed site identified significant omissions of Mr. Lauzier's presentation. He mentioned that, according to the promoter's website, the graphite will be intended for military armaments and nuclear power plants. In addition, he recalled that in the treatment process, a flotation site will involve the addition of large quantities of kerosene. He also mentioned that in 2008, Canada Carbon, operating under the name Bolero Resources at the time, could not meet some of its financial obligations and paid some of its creditors with stock shares instead of cash.

We asked Mr. Lauzier to request that Carbon Canada commit now to following the BAPE / PEA0 process, however, he was not able to confirm whether the company will agree or not.

Our experts emphasized the importance of citizen engagement with their municipal council so their desire to obtain a detailed environmental impact study will be heard and respected.

Mr. Lapointe asked Mr. Lauzier whether the data presented in the reports had been submitted to the Environmental Ministry and Mr. Lauzier said no. Mr. Lapointe and Me Asselin re-stated that BAPE should be part of the process for this project.

In a respectful climate, this meeting allowed the expression of several points of view, and endorsed the importance of the impacts that such project can have on a community.

A big thank you to all of those who attended, on such a beautiful and sunny day, and for their generous donations as well.

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SOURCE: SOS GSLR
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