

Gumption Public Meeting #1
June 28, 2017 @ Parry Sound Public Library

Present - John Brisbane, Grace Brisbane, Anita and Ron Woodcock, Rick Zanussi, Alyssa Tudhope, Linda Woodard, Doug McCann, Tom Higgins, Gillian Sahanatien, Hami Jaber, Adrian Averhoff, Sally Powless, Kris Phillips, Lord Rupert Kindersley, Justine Veloso-Phillips, Krista Holmes and Anna Martin (via video).

Meeting called to order at 7:06pm By Rupert.

Agenda (as attached) was read to all attendees.

Anna read the document “Setting the Scene” (as attached).

Rupert read the “Executive Summary” (as attached).

Following the documents being read, the floor was open to questions.

1. Question from Cllr Rick Zanussi:

In regards to the 2010 nighttime scuba diving operation, where is the proof?

Response from Anna:

She was verbally told by someone who was there, however hopes to see if someone can confirm this information and the timing by request through the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Question from Linda Woodward:

Who did the CIL testing? And how do you go about getting permission to do the testing?

Response from Anna and Kris:

- The Ministry has well registry records. There have been over 60 reported monitoring wells since 2010.
- All of the reported monitoring wells mentioned in the Parry Sound Project report are through privately hired companies, which are believed to be hired by CIL (or one of CIL’s successors) as the wells are located on their property.
- McDougall Twsp has said they have not done any testing, but we believe they have received the CIL testing results; all the more reason why it is more important for a third party to do the tests.
- We want to work together with CIL, McDougall, etc. in a spirit of cooperation rather than confrontation.
- Kris will be taking the lead on getting the proper testing in place. This includes proper bottles, soil samples, etc. from an independent non-biased company.

3. Question from John Brisbane:

How much communication has Gumption had with McDougall?

Response from Anna:

A couple of interactions with various staff over a couple of years, but really did not get a lot of answers. McDougall was aware of this meeting, but were not prepared to provide a statement. Lots of meetings seem to be “closed sessions”. One McDougall employee said that council was not prepared to share what they knew with the public.

We have been told that McDougall has been in communication with CIL approx. once a month.

4. Question from Linda Woodard:

How did Weeks Construction end up with that chunk of land (that was formerly the CIL's)?

Response from Anna:

Anna believes that the land was purchased based on a land title that she has seen.

5. Quick story from Grace Brisbane.

Grace was born and raised in Parry Sound - Nobel to be exact. She told a story of how she and her friends used to cross a creek by the current Nobel school. It was called “Acid Creek” based on the pink and blue colours that appeared in the gross water. That same water flowed into Georgian Bay. She knew that something was weird back then; something was wrong with the frogs. They weren't normal - they had weird bumps and lumps on them and the water had a terrible smell.

Where do we go from here? (was asked based on the agenda)

- We are going to get experts involved. And cooperate with everyone who wants to be involved.
- Toxicities and remediation are our main concern.
Comment: Let's get the UNESCO people involved. They could help with this issue too.

Our next steps:

- Speak to the Aboriginal communities further. They have concerns over Depot Harbour. By bringing more people and awareness to Gumption's activities, we believe that remediation and the health and well-being of the local community will become a top priority.
- With this new momentum, we hope to continue to gather more stories and add to our database of anecdotal evidence.
- There are a lot of professional concerned groups who are becoming involved and we are following up with them.
- Continue with a lot more investigating and try and carry out some initial testing.
- In regards to fundraising (needed for funding testing and research), Rupert is looking into how donors could get a charitable tax receipt.

6. Question from Linda Woodard:

The Salt piles - are they on the radar?

Response from Kris and Anna:

- Kris advised that the McFarland dump receives the snow melt for the Highways and the well for his house, which is about 800 meters from the dump, has salinity levels

that are ~6 times the normal level. In addition the water smells of garbage. Both these factors indicate that the dump has not been properly lined and/or managed.

- We believe that there is a LOT of pollution from the salt.
- Anna wants this to continue to be a collaborative effort as this is the best prospect of getting information out of municipalities etc.

7. Question from John Brisbane:

Have you spoke at all with John Macfie when doing your research?

Response from Anna:

Anna had a nice conversation with John Macfie. They talked about a lot of history including the CIL, however not so much on the environment.

8. Story from Linda Woodard:

Linda wrote an article for a 2010 Sideroads edition (she is going to dig it up so that we can review it). She spoke with 3 women who used to work for the CIL. There's more to the story, but one thing that stood out, was one of the women speaking of eye-witnessing an accident (while working) where melted human flesh was stuck to a window.

9. Question from Alyssa Tudhope:

Who else have we partnered with, or hope to partner with, when doing research?

Response from Rupert and Anna:

- Hoping to partner with Georgian Bay Forever (Depot Harbour currently). Meeting planned shortly.
- Ontario Rivers Alliance (Alyssa suggested we approach them, as she worked with them on a project that she did while at university, and believe that they would take an interest in Nobel.) {Should be noted that Alyssa is a young women who was also born and raised in Nobel and this research really concerns her.}
- Georgian Bay Association are an advocacy group, so do not do research, but they are already engaged with Gumption. It is early days and GBA has so far distributed the information to their network and their associations, who have about 3,000 members, and is awaiting responses. Meeting planned shortly.
- Part of the GBA network also includes Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve, Georgian Bay Land Trust, and Eastern Georgian Bay Steward Council and GBA will be following up with them.

With proper invites, we think that we hope to get a representative(s) from each of the above mentioned associations to come out to future meetings.

10. Story from Krista Holmes

Krista's mother in law recently commented on one of Gumption's Facebook posts. Her comment advised the public to choose elected officials wisely, as mayors are often acclaimed because nobody runs against them, and stated that McDougall's CAO is unqualified, uneducated in running a township and that his position was never advertised publicly. She believes the voting public has the right to know what is going on in their municipality and referred to closed meetings held by the Municipality if McDougall. She also referred to testing done at the Stockey Centre by her brother as well as the Ministry of Environment being a major player in the Nobel-CIL environmental problem.

The official comment can be viewed on Gumption's website in the "News and Comments" section at www.gumptioninc.org

Krista spoke of how the Stockey Centre is slowly sinking, so the comments about the land having a lot of mercury in it did not surprise her. Krista asked her Uncle about the land that he tested when he was with Conestoga River Associates (where the Stockey Centre currently sits) and although it may be a funny coincidence, we learned that the Town of McDougall hired Conestoga Rovers to assess the site conditions during their expansion of the landfill. To Gumption's knowledge, CIL/Nobel hired Golder Associates for environmental consulting services.

He mentioned that the Town had gone to court with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy. It was in 1997 he believes. The Town should have that report since they were the client. He did not know what became of the site remediation, since that was after he left Conestoga River Associates.

11. Question from Linda Woodard:

Is White Squall involved?

Response from Anna/Rupert:

We've had conversations with them, and will continue to do so. GBA works with them from time to time.

12. Comment from Rick Zanussi:

Rick advised that his grandfather came over to Canada to work with CIL, which is why he now resides in Parry Sound. His mother was born in Nobel. Rick stated that he was surprised that he knew nothing about this matter, having been here all his life. He also said that he would make sure that this matter was discussed at the next Township of the Archipelago council meeting.

13. Question from Alyssa Tudhope:

Have we had much involvement from First Nations groups?

Response from panel:

- Recent conversation with Warren Tabobondung of the Wasauksing First Nation.
- There is also interest from the Shawanaga FN.
- Unfortunately neither band was able to attend the meeting, but we will be engaging with them, probably with GBA.
- This could be a template for the involvement of the broader community on similar pollution/public health issues as they might arise in other parts of Canada.

14. Question from Linda Woodard:

What might we do to help?

Response from panel:

- Have follow-up discussions with those interested (for further steps)
- Continue to help build database of cases.

- Help to obtain REAL factual data (studies don't lie)
- Get educated.
- There will be follow up to the minutes with those that indicated that they are interested.
- Help the existing group move forward with funding.

15. Question from Cllr Doug McCann:

Is this premature to bring to Council?

Response from panel:

We think that all municipalities should be invited to meeting #2 (many were to this first meeting, but there was not a lot of notice). Everything here is public knowledge. Gumption will continue to be transparent, and share their information (so Doug was left to determine when/if he wants to bring this info forward now, or at a later point).

16. Comments from Linda Woodard and John Brisbane

From experience, they know that it is hard to deal with municipalities. They all seem to have their way of hiding things. But we have ammunition. Neither is happy with things being hidden (these behind closed doors meetings). Let's move forward with pursuing conversations, asking questions, etc.

17. Question from Doug McCann:

Are Tony Clement (MP for Parry Sound Muskoka), and Norm Miller (MPP for Parry Sound Muskoka) aware of this situation?

Answer from Krista:

Yes. However, both would definitely appreciate being invited to further meetings, and being kept in the loop of the details/updates as necessary.

WRAP up @ 8:19pm.