



ST. MARGARET'S BAY STEWARDSHIP ASSOCIATION

The St Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association Board wishes to voice its concerns regarding the application made to HRM for a change in the zoning on land held by Scotian Materials adjacent to Crown Land formerly known as the Bowater lands, just south of Exit 5 on highway 103, in order to place and build a quarry and an asphalt plant.

Rezoning this area would open the door to industrializing Crown Land which is the focus of a long term community forest plan for forestry and recreational use, both of which would create livelihood in the forestry and tourism fields. By agreeing to this requested change in the Land Use By-law, the effects could reverberate throughout not only HRM but also across the province. Certainly the placement of an asphalt plant would have long range adverse effects on the air and water quality, the pristine view plane and the wildlife environment in the surrounding areas which include dozens of lakes, rivers, streams, St. Margaret's Bay itself; schools, daycares, homes, businesses; rails to trails, highway 103; all subject to the noxious air particulates produced by asphalt plants as the well known prevailing winds carry these harmful substances near and far, while the waste bi-products seep into the land and drain southward to the waterways which find their way into wells and the ocean. In addition, the present proposed access road from the developing 5A interchange on highway 103 to this site is a circuitous 10-12 kilometre length over treacherous "hill and valley" land forms; decidedly not a direct access to any road requiring asphalt. This road is on crown land used by people and vehicles for recreation and resource. Huge gravel and asphalt trucks travelling a long distance over such challenging terrain is the recipe for an environmental disaster along with imminent danger to people using this land. There is a high risk for bitumen spills; residential areas would be vulnerable to hazardous airborne pollution; the presence of benzene in the asphalt mix infects downstream water sources; sounds of 24 hour/7 day truck traffic creates a heavy and constant noise encumbrance. The whole environment and its inhabitants are threatened. Environmental testing and assessments need to be better defined as to what is being tested and by whom as present assessments do not cover the most harmful substances known to be sourced at asphalt plants and which have been proven to be detrimental to people, wildlife and the surrounding environs (air-water-land). There is a definite lack of proper environmental assessment.

Application for rezoning has been made to HRM, our municipality, while provincially, DNR has provided a right-of-way agreement to Scotian Materials to pass over 10-12 km of crown land. Are these levels of government communicating with one another? Are they communicating with one another in the best interests of the people and the land owned by the people - crown land? What is their process for collaborating and cooperating on meaningful environmental assessments? How many government officials or staff have stood by this proposed site ...and have taken a glance at Westwood Hills fully within their view plane...

Placement of an industrial plant amidst pristine crown lands makes little common sense when there are obvious existing industrial sites available and within a reasonable distance where asphalt is required. Reports that existing asphalt plants in Nova Scotia are only 50% functional raises the question of WHY another asphalt plant?

Better choices are available to the decision-makers.

Our concerns are for the health of people and wildlife, of land, air and water, of our future.