

Keith and Judy McCharles



Attn: PRRD Planning Staff
Re: File # 21-012ZN Rogers Trucking

We own a residential property that has been adversely affected by sawdust and the soil berms that have and are being used/ stored on the property currently applying for rezoning. Rogers Trucking has for the last several months failed to contain the contents of their storage piles to their property. As a result, we are opposed to their zoning request as the operation of this facility is having a negative impact on our primary residence. We also have concerns about possible health and safety issues.

There have been some major losses of material. See attached PowerPoint. The property that the company has expanded onto, formerly contained residential homes with a significant number of trees which until their removal worked to create a wind and sound barrier between the original business location and our subdivision. As our property is on the outside north west edge of the subdivision we bear the brunt of the debris. We frequently hear the equipment backup alarms when they work at all hours including holidays and early mornings, before 7:00 a.m. and sometimes late at night. I will try to attach a video I recording I recorded in our bedroom, so you understand how loud it often is.

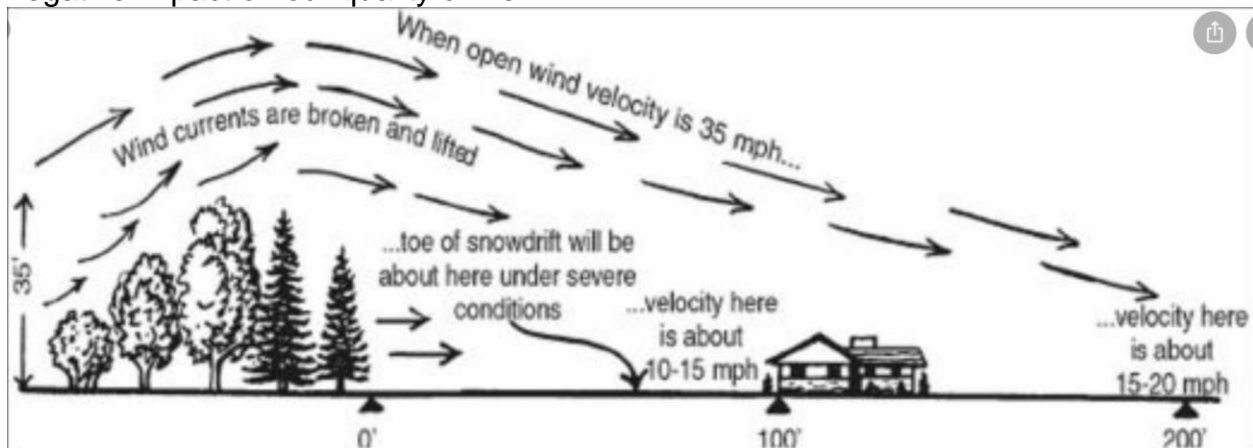
When the wind blows sawdust and/or debris from storage piles, it frequently drifts onto our property. This is both a nuisance and a health concern for us and our pets. I have images of the dust and have collected samples of the debris that enters and sticks to our home, outbuildings, gutters, and vehicles. It can range from fine particulate matter to sawdust chunks. We have had pockets of sawdust throughout our property. We have even had sawdust in our hot tub and barbeque. We are concerned about the health impacts of the particulates.¹ It collects in our gutters. We collect rainwater from our roof to water our plants, as we have to haul all of our water. We are concerned about the contamination and leaching from the sawdust in the gutters, resulting in toxins entering our food supply. Sometimes the sawdust particles cover the ground which irritates our dog's paws and encases our cat when she rolls around outside, which she in turn ingests when she licks her fur to clean it. I am continuously sweeping up sawdust as it is constantly being tracked and/or blown in, if our windows are open. Our windows get caked with fine sawdust and particles that need to be scrubbed off.

Presently the property requesting the rezoning approval does not have any containment berms to contain any leaching that may occur from the contaminated soil reclamation endeavors they are conducting. The materials are mixed together out in the open, there is nothing to contain the release of any toxic matter into the air or surface. The area is

¹ See https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/chemicals/wood_dust.html

very damp and porous. The water table is very high, when we dig a fence post hole it frequently fills with water. What is preventing contamination from flowing onto or into our property? We grow food and berries and are concerned about possible soil/ ground water contamination.

The company does not seem to have loss of containment/ clean-up plan. If they do, it was not put in place after the breaches of containment that have occurred this year. On several occasions, Rogers Trucking has refused to address containment issues directly with us. We have given them time to address the issue, but the problem continues. According to some second-hand information, they feel they have dealt with the situation by constructing an earth berm. However, this has created its own set of problems. The berm is not a permanent structure but rather a storage pile that they add and subtract material to depending on their needs. So, any vegetation that establishes to stop wind erosion is continuously disturbed, so we are now getting even more dirt particles blowing through any openings in our home. Unfortunately, the leading edge of the berm seems to be working like an airplane wing and creating negative pressure. I found a diagram that shows how snow is deposited over some trees that would represent the sawdust pile and current berm, and the snow deposits would represent the sawdust. Our home is within 200 yards of the sawdust pile. We are continuously bearing the brunt of the debris whenever the prevailing wind is blowing in the right direction and will continue to do so. The directional arrows in the diagram show how the wind currents travel and the wind picks up the particulates as it travels over the sawdust pile and dirt berm depositing residue on us. The operation of their facility is presently having a negative impact on our quality of life.



The stockpiles of sawdust and dirt continue to move closer and closer to our property. This area experiences significant amounts of wind. This needs to be addressed if they are going to store materials that can become airborne at this location. Materials such as dirt and sawdust need to be contained in some form of a structure, whether it is a three-sided structure like the highways department use to store salt and sand or within another type of enclosed structure. There also needs to be a limit on the size of piles that can be stored at this location. Earlier this year we literally had a sawdust mountain because there were some inventory control problems and they apparently had a substantial amount of material needed to be accepted. Like many weather events that are occurring around our province, our residence being covered in sawdust has shifted

from once in a blue moon occurrence, to an ongoing one. We have had sawdust in our bedding. Unfortunately, the type of wood fibre in the stockpile is particularly irritating. It has already caused some discomfort to both our pets and I. Their stockpiles of materials need to be contained in all-weather situations; the surrounding properties should never have to deal with what we have had to. Plans also need to be put in place for unexpected severe weather events as they are occurring with more frequency. Do they have other properties where stockpiles of overflow materials can be housed instead of at this location?

Our local mill often experiences fires within their sawdust piles. Are safety plans in place to mitigate and protect surrounding properties from burning embers should a fire erupt? We do not have fire hydrants available to protect our subdivision should fire erupt.

We hope that this zoning request is denied but if it proceeds we plead with you to help us get our quality of life back. Prior to this rezoning application being approved it is essential that these points are addressed:

- windproof containment needs to be installed for all storage piles
- containment berms must be installed to contain all potential contamination to site.
- requirements are put in place to ensure that operations are conducted as far as possible from the nearby residential subdivision to reduce the impact on local residents.
- due to the lack of fire hydrant access for the nearby residential subdivision, fire suppression equipment is on site to prevent burning embers from transiting to nearby properties.
- if a berm is installed as a containment process, it is essential that it is a permanent structure. If it is earthen then some kind of erosion protection needs to be applied to stabilize the surface and prevent particles of soil from covering the surrounding area in silt/ sand. It also needs to fully surround/ enclose the area.
- a noise buffer needs to be put in place to reduce the sound of industrial noise from the heavy equipment used in their processing operation
- when breaches of containment occur, plans need to be in place to remove debris from affected areas

Please feel free to contact us for further information. Our email is

[REDACTED]

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