

# Firm Unveils Plan to Rehabilitate and Build Upon Queenston Quarry

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A company that hopes to rehabilitate the Queenston Quarry and build a world-renowned resort and spa with an estate winery and championship golf course is seeking approval in principle for its proposal from the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Frank Racioppo, president of the Queenston Quarry Reclamation Company (QQR), unveiled the company's plans for the 248-acre site on the north side of Townline Road and Highway 405 at the edge of the Niagara Escarpment to town councillors Tuesday.

He said QQR filed an application with the Niagara Escarpment Commission for an amendment to the permitted land use in December. It includes the permanent termination of industrial waste disposal and escarpment extraction.

In a report to the town's committee of the whole, QQR stated "(the) rehabilitation plan will successfully transition this industrial site ... (and) will ensure the NEC purpose is achieved through sustainable design enhancing the escarpment's natural environment." The first part of the application, dealing with 213 acres, proposes that buildings occupy only two per cent of the land with the rest reserved for green space and agricultural use for the golf course and winery. Other plans under consideration for this area are an equestrian centre, a path connected to the Bruce Trail, a beach area, a croquet field that will convert to a skating rink, cross-country skiing, rock climbing and gardens with waterfalls.

The second part of the application involves a mixture of housing for the remaining 35 acres on the western side of the property in the St. Davids area. The details of the residential plans for the site are still being developed by QQR, but the report states the company will "create a vital, attractive neighbourhood character implementing the town's urban design objectives."

"We think the Niagara Escarpment Commission would be interested to know what the town thinks of this (proposal)," said Racioppo, requesting that councillors pass a resolution that they generally support "the direction and vision" of the QQR and "encourage the consideration of a high quality tourism accommodation that would be appropriately located in this rural setting."

"I'm supportive of the project," Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs said. "But I'm not supportive of rushing something through that has not had staff comment."

Town councillors requested a staff report on the company's proposal for discussion at the next committee-of-the-whole meeting March 3. The Niagara Escarpment Commission has scheduled a hearing to deal with the application March 20.