

2/2/2020

To Zoning Board Members:

I have read through the documentation provided by the applicant indicating the new proposed route and manner in which trucks will be entering/exiting the gravel pit. I have also heard that video cameras will be installed to monitor trucks that go different routes. I still have major concerns with this new information as it still does not consider the road issues, safety issues, and how it will affect the rural livelihood of our family farms, acreages, and farming operations.

1-video cameras---where will these be installed? On all gravel road intersections in the Alton Township? Who will monitor these? Who will enforce if a truck travels outside of the restricted entry/access point? What will the repercussions be if someone is caught? A warning? The project manager isn't going to stop his or her trucks or drivers if a job needs to get done. So, it cannot be said that the driver will no longer be driving truck anymore as that is not the gravel pit owner's decision. It's the company's overseeing manager who is monitoring the truck loads to specific sites. There is NO ONE to enforce speed limits or monitor where and how trucks are getting to and from this pit. This is a major safety issue and road condition issue. There are BLINDSPOTS in many places where children may be biking (we use roads because we don't have sidewalks) or vehicles or farm equipment are driving.

2-excessive dust---this may be a "nimble" item for a few board members, however, it affects our rural way of living, both personally and professionally. We know there is dust when individuals drive on our gravel roads, but with the excessive amounts coming from these trucks, we will be breathing it in, our livestock will be inhaling it, our acreage lawns will be coated in dust, our children's play equipment, our homes, and most importantly, our crops. Dust control prices are high, and the owner stated it would only be used in front of acreages. What about our crops alongside the roads? Many of us use our ditch grasses for feed as well as alfalfa. We also sell our alfalfa to potential buyers. If there is too much dust, our buyers won't want it. In addition, we pay substantial amounts of money to make sure the nutrients in our soil can optimize plant growth, to protect the environment, to aid in the diagnosis of plant culture problems, and to save money and conserve energy by applying only the amount of fertilizer needed rather than using excessive amounts. Having too much dust on our crops will impact our testing results, as well as our crop production, and may hinder how much fertilizer and other materials to use. This is in regards to the foods we all eat as well as what livestock consumes. Our livestock may have more respiratory issues as well, resulting in more veterinary bills and possibly death.

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"...improve efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural operations..."

"...minimize interference with farming activities and discourage premature development, which leads to costly and inefficient public expenditures..."

3-there are numerous items that will be taken care of by the pit owners and operator going from Alton Township into Sherman Township. Who calculated the 7% grade of the hill that will be cut down? (The grade of a road is rise/run \* 100, so who did this, determining it was a 7% grade and who will determine when it reaches the 4% grade?) Has this area been surveyed? How will it impact the flood plain since the road identified is part of it? Who will make sure these items are done appropriately? Has the state office been notified and approved this? Environmental Protection Agency? Utilities? Have the land owners approved this? There are SO MANY questions that have

remained unanswered. Yet, Sherman Township approved the road usage. In my eyes, this was a premature act, without having all of the above details in place first. A lot of decisions are being made without getting approvals from others. Going behind people's backs without gaining their consent and assent, and not giving them the full details about what will be taking place are unethical practices as the individuals who will be affected cannot make a reasoned and informed choice, primarily because they don't have the information they need to do so.

4- township roads are not meant for this traffic or load usage...it was stated in the Alton letter to the board members. The township roads are already in tough shape due to the flooding and monetary issues. Our roads are not meant for this type of traffic or road usage. Why do large operations, which will have less traffic than this proposal, have to build paved roads even though it helps our rural way of living (i.e. ethanol plant)? How does this differ from a large dairy unit? They're all in agricultural divisions.

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5- we are talking 30 years here...not one or two years. I have four children who may be interested in farming someday along with other neighbors who have children with similar aspirations as well. We are trying to build our family farms. With the hindrance and nuisance these trucks would create, who would want to stay? It would impact their love for farm life. Our crops and livestock would suffer. Our safety would always be of concern. And our roads will be in shambles. This decision will not only impact us now but future generations to come.

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As stated before in other documentation, we are NOT AGAINST this pit from opening. We understand there is a need for gravel. The owner(s) of the Davis proposals need to realize that building a road to the east of the pit will help alleviate most of the issues mentioned above. There would still need to be rules in place about drivers using other roads for their needs, but using this primary route to the east will be better as trucks prefer to stay on paved roads with consistent speed limits.

In my eyes, it's not about the money that the owner states is the issue because a lot will be needed for their promises to hold true, including road re-construction, weekly road maintenance, relocating utility needs, building fences, building ditch slopes, installing video cameras and keeping them updated and ready, installing stop sign warning lights, building a 60% turn to the north, tearing into

a hill, getting road surveys completed, getting compliances with the state, EPA, and others, putting dust control down in front of acreages, and more. As stated previously in the Alton Letter, the money aspect though should not be a concern of the board's but that of safety, road conditions, and preserving and protecting the rural acreages, farms, and crops already in existence.

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I'm a parent, a farmwife, a professional, and a neighbor trying to advocate and defend our way of living and our safety. Your decision can make a huge impact on all of our lives. Please think this through and put yourself in our shoes. Thirty years is a long time.

Thank you,  
Mary Bowne