

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Pleasant View, an historic community of eighteen modest homes and cottages, won't be pleasant anymore if the Rock County Planning and Development Committee approves expansion of the existing non-metallic mining operation as currently proposed by Hurd Farm, Inc. At a hearing held by the Committee on June 28, 2018, Hurd Farms, Inc. proposed expanding existing operations into two new large areas totaling 35 acres that lie as close as 400 feet from the Rock River. This expansion requires a special conditional use permit to be approved under the Rock County Shoreland Zoning Ordinance.

Many residents attended the recent hearing to complain that this expansion would disturb the natural flora and fauna of the impacted area; destroy the natural beauty of the ancient terrain; degrade the natural landscape through dynamiting the land to access limestone; put major stress on migrating birds and year-round wildlife; and possibly further pollute the river through mining related run off. Residents also complained about current mining activities which go from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. It is so loud during the day that they are often unable to sit on their own porches or piers, thus compromising the solitude enjoyed for generations.

The proposed expansion will exacerbate the impact of the noise pollution. One resident said the noise from dynamiting is particularly worrisome for those suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome. Of course, property values for all home owners in the impacted residential communities will plummet substantially without any recourse.

At a minimum, Rock County government should require an independent Environmental Impact Report the results of which should form the basis for whether this expansion is approved.

All negative impacts identified would have to be resolved to the satisfaction of the County and impacted residents to ensure that neighborhoods like Pleasant View continue to be pleasant for future generations. If projected impacts are too severe, the Wisconsin State Department of Transportation should access limestone mined from other nearby quarries that do not lie within the area governed by the Shoreline Ordinance. The quality of a river's water and the beauty of the existing historic landscape should not be compromised for the short-term improvements of concrete roadways.

Sincerely,

Steven, Carol and Susan Porter, fourth generation residents