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The VIEW from here

United we stand

I've been a reporter and editor for 29 years. As someone whose job is to inform and editorialize on important issues of the day there's nothing more exciting than to pull up to a scheduled public meeting place to see a full parking lot and people hurrying in to get a seat.

That has been my experience in recent weeks as concerned citizens and business owners petition their local government units to mount a defense against a proposal to mine gravel from the D-Bar-A Boy Scout Ranch in

Metamora Township. The plan would put up to 100 gravel trains per day on Dryden Road through the villages of Dryden and Metamora for the next 30 years.

A proposal by the Levy Company and the Boy Scouts of America to mine gravel from a 500-acre parcel has the potential to destroy the way of life and charm of the villages and for anyone who travels the Dryden Road corridor.

Victor Dzenowagis, for one, has good reason to be concerned. After spending more than \$3 million to renovate and rebuild the White Horse Inn in downtown Metamora the prospect of scores of gravel haulers passing eight feet from his front door all day long has him worried what it will do to his customer base and his historic building. Despite treacherous road conditions Tuesday night, he and several other community activists made their way to a meeting of the Dryden Township Board and asked for the board's assistance to join the growing chorus of municipalities to go on the record opposing the gravel mine application.

"This is a defining time for us ... This is the time to make all those people you work for proud of you. The sense of urgency is upon us," Dzenowagis said. "It's every bit as

much your fight as it is their fight."

Wes Wickham, president of the Metamora Area Chamber of Commerce, was at the Dryden Township meeting. The night before he was at a meeting of the Metamora Township Board.

"Help them out, because it's going to come here. Please support Metamora Township," he pleaded before Dryden Township officials.

Dryden-area resident Mark

Calvert too had been in attendance at the Dryden and Metamora township meetings to fight

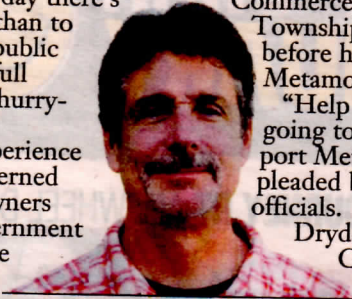
for his community. "This isn't good for anyone ... This is going to be a real fight. I'm just asking the board to cooperate with Metamora Township."

I don't want to steal the thunder of my own reporting, so you'll have to read Sunday's *County Press* to learn what Dryden Township officials did as a result of those who came before them. It's safe to say, though, that there's strength in numbers when people come together focused on a single issue — especially when it's something as important as maintaining the quality of life we enjoy here in Lapeer County.

The Metamora Township Board enacted a four-month moratorium on new gravel mine applications, an action supported by village officials in Metamora and Dryden. Metamora Township officials will hold public hearings in the near future to solicit further input from area citizens as they move forward in their tact to prevent the gravel mine from happening.

The grass-roots mobilization of citizens backed by local officials proved effective in putting up opposition to the proposed ET Rover Pipeline project because it united people from neighboring communities and units of government.

Let's do the same with the gravel mine application.



Jeff Hogan—Editor

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