

The County Press OPINION

WE WANT TO HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY: The County Press accepts Letters to the Editor, Sound Off, Facebook and Twitter comments. Letter submissions should be less than 350 words. All other submissions should not exceed 200 words. Email to letterscp@mihomepaper.com or send to Letter to the Editor, PO Box 220, Lapeer, MI 48446. All letters and Sound Offs should include writer's full name, home address and phone number.



FACEBOOK:
Post a comment
on any article on
mihomepaper.com



TWITTER:
Tweet us
@mihomepaper.com,
and we may publish
your comment.



EMAIL:
Send your Letters to the
Editor to
letterscp@mihomepaper.com.

EDITORIAL

Rough road ahead for gravel mine bid

Many residents in the quaint and normally quiet village of Metamora and surrounding area are in an uproar about pending plans by an international aggregate company to mine gravel from the D-bar-A Boy Scout Ranch. The resulting timber clearcutting and mining would result in dozens of loud and dirty double-bottom gravel trains and logging trucks rolling through the village every day, or on eastbound Dryden Road enroute to Van Dyke.

On Monday nearly 60 concerned residents packed a Metamora Township Board meeting to voice their discontent about a recently announced application by the Edward Levy Company and the Boy Scouts of America to mine gravel for up to 30 years on nearly 500 acres of the sprawling and picturesque Boy Scout ranch.

Local officials have no intention of letting their community become overrun by noisy gravel trucks that would kick up dust on the diners enjoying a meal on the outdoor patios of White Horse Inn and High Street Eatery, both located near the intersection of High (Dryden Road) and Oak streets in the heart of the village. These business owners and others in the community have spent a lot of money and sweat equity as they staked their claims on the future of Metamora — all of which could be jeopardized by the proposed large-scale gravel mining project located just east of town.

Only last year many of the same residents in the vicinity dodged a bullet when the ET Rover Pipeline Co. changed its mind about a natural gas pipeline route that would have carved a pathway through the beautiful countryside like a hot knife through butter. Now the same peace and tranquility is threatened all over again by two more outside organizations that stand to make a lot of money in our community with little regard to the community that's only just now getting back on its feet after the Great Recession.

Kudos to the township board that Monday took the advice of their legal counsel, hometown attorney Mike Nolan, to approve a four-month moratorium on any new gravel mining in Metamora Township while officials prepare themselves for what could be a long and expensive appeal to the project.

Wasting no time, Nolan and the township hired one of the state's most highly-regarded attorneys with regards to understanding zoning and master plans as it relates to gravel mining disputes. Gerry Fisher has been retained to assist Nolan in preparing documentation and legal briefs in an attempt to block or at least restrict Levy's ambitions to haul tons of gravel and dirt through the village and township of Metamora every day. The Village of Dryden and the East Dryden Road corridor to M-53 and south through Almont ought to be concerned about the proposed gravel mine operation as well because the same degree of unrelenting truck traffic could be headed their way.

The Metamora Township Board and its planning commission will hold a joint meeting at 7 p.m. Jan. 11 at the township hall in a proactive move to bring everyone up to speed as their lawyers prepare recommendations to fight the gravel mine application.

Like we did as a community when the ET Rover Pipeline proposal threatened the tranquility of four townships south of I-69, area citizens and township officials have an opportunity to again organize a grass-roots campaign to thwart plans that have the potential to disturb the peace along Dryden Road for 30 years into the future.

It's also puzzling that an organization like the Boy Scouts of America that claims to celebrate the great outdoors would agree to carve up and turn hundreds of acres of its property into a lunar landscape of gravel piles and pits until, and if, the land is reclaimed and restored after they reap their financial gain.

The motto of the Boy Scouts is to "Be Prepared." Its slogan is "Do a Good Turn Daily." We hope the Scouts are prepared for the backlash and anguish their gravel mine application has stirred in their backyard and will think long and hard whether to diminish the quality of life around the Metamora Township ranch or whether there is really a short-term financial gain.

READER FEEDBACK

Disappointed by plans to mine near Metamora

So here's what's going to happen. The Boy Scouts are going to greedily let an international mining company turn the property into a lunar landscape, and then when done they will sell off portions of the land to a developer that will build huge homes around these new man-made lakes.

Meanwhile, who suffers? We do. The people who live in Metamora who will have to see and hear gravel trucks all day and part of the weekend that will make the village a very undesirable place to live or do business.

I hope township (Metamora) attorney Mike Nolan has some magic up his sleeve to prevent this from happening, because this will forever change the landscape and desirability of living in the Metamora area. I was so disappointed to read about the plans to mine gravel from the Boy Scout ranch and put all that material onto our local roads.

Christy Riopelle
Metamora Township

Gravel mine bad news for Metamora, Dryden

It would appear the Boy Scouts of America and the Levy Company are going to get very rich from the deal they're working to strike to mine gravel from the D-bar-A Boy Scout Ranch in Metamora Township. Can you imagine how much money they will make on the gravel, and then add in the timber they will sell from the nearly 400 acres they're going to strip from the land? And can you imagine how many truckloads of gravel and timber will be going down our local roads?

It's private property so I wonder what the township can do to restrict or try to prevent this new operation from starting. But I sure hope they try. I live off Dryden Road and I'm not too excited at the prospect of dozens and dozens of heavy, noisy, dusty and slow-moving gravel trains going back and forth for 30 years.

There goes the neighborhood and the property values. I feel sorry for the White Horse Inn that just built a wonderful outdoor patio for its guests. But who would want to sit out there in the summer when there's truck after truck rumbling by them only a few feet away while they try to enjoy a meal or adult beverage?

This is bad for Metamora and bad for Dryden Township that will realize the most negative impact from the heavy truck traffic on Dryden Road.

Noah Matthews
Dryden Township

Tired of spineless politicians

The County Press is like 99 percent of the liberal media. You say be careful what you ask for if we like Donald Trump, but you and all the talking heads on TV continue to miss the point.

We're tired of spineless politicians like Barack Obama who can't even say the words radical Muslim jihadists who are tearing this world and country apart. The last time I checked the only people cutting off the heads of people or else murdering people in Paris and California are Muslims. They're not Christians or Jews, they're radicalized Muslims who are hell-bent on destroying us and our way of life.

Republicans like Donald Trump or Chris Christie are the kind of strong leaders we need at this time in this country to call things as they see them and to prevent further murder in our country at the hands of Muslims. I say be careful what you ask for if you support Hillary Clinton because she will only continue the same lame foreign policy as Obama and will do nothing to stop radicalized Muslims in the United States.

Ruth Anne Mitchell
Imlay Township

'Thanks' for support of Lapeer Goodfellows

On behalf of the Lapeer Goodfellows, I would like to thank the following people and organizations for their recent donations to our cause: Laurie Verbeke, Gary Nichols, Verna and William Valley, Doug and

Beth Henderson, Michael McKee, Lapeer County Bank & Trust Co., Mike and Jean Best, Willard Schafer, John and Carol Jostock, anonymous for cash donation, Bob and Gretchen Bityk, Dr. Jeffrey and Virginia Harris, First Presbyterian Church — Presbyterian Women, anonymous for knit slippers donation and Amy Nicholson.

Curt Carter
Treasurer
Lapeer Goodfellows

'Hobby businesses' will not be getting my support

It's all well and dandy to say people should shop local for the holidays, but has anyone ever really tried to do this? Everything from jewelry to clothes to furniture is much more expensive in Lapeer than I can find in Auburn Hills at Great Lakes Crossing or at Lakeside.

I make \$12 an hour so as much as I'd like to support local merchants I can't afford their high prices and unrealistic hours for working people like me and my family. If they close their hobby businesses at 6 p.m. I won't be shopping at them, because my husband and I work for a living and we have to commute to work so we're not home until after 7 p.m.

I don't appreciate preachy chamber or business people suggesting that if we don't support them the local businesses will go away.

Sheri Armstrong
Elba Township

