



December 16, 2015

Village Council
Metamora, Michigan

Re: A Strategy to Oppose New Gravel Mining in Metamora Township

Dear Councilmembers:

By now you are aware of the Boy Scout/Levy Corporation request to Metamora Township to re-zone/approve a special use permit for the purpose of a 20-30 year gravel mining operation comprising approximately 500 acres on both the Boy Scout ranch and adjacent private property. The operation of the gravel pit and the subsequent mining operations along with the inherent noise, pollution, heavy truck traffic, safety risk, environmental concerns and conflict with the inherent nature of the Metamora area would be have very serious negative consequences on the entire village of Metamora. It would be totally devastating to the very way of life of the village. While the decision to approve/deny the re-zone request is the sole responsibility of Metamora Township, we strongly believe that the Village Council of Metamora has a moral and fiduciary responsibility to strongly urge the Township to reject the re-zone request and for the village of Metamora to offer financial support should Metamora Township reject the request and become embroiled in lengthy and expensive litigation.

Course of Action for Metamora Village Council

Based on the assumptions that:

1. Metamora Township will consider viewpoints of impacted stakeholders within the township.
2. Metamora Township should not have to bear the entire cost burden of fighting the re-zone request.



3. That there is strength in numbers – the more governmental groups that work together to oppose the mining proposal, the more effective that opposition will be.

Please consider, discuss and act on the following request:

1. Council vote to urge, in the strongest language possible, that Metamora Township **deny** the re-zone/special use permit request for the gravel mining operation.
2. Council shall communicate its opposition to the mining project – in writing – to Metamora Township, Dryden Township and the village of Dryden, Metamora DDA, Dryden DDA, and Metamora Chamber of Commerce as soon as possible so that the village council of Metamora’s input may be incorporated into each stakeholder’s point-of-view of the gravel pit, and their subsequent response.
3. Council shall attend – **en mass** – the combined Metamora Township Council and Planning Committee Meeting that is scheduled for January 11, 2016 @ 7:00pm. Let the Township know that they are not alone in this fight – that you **stand as one** - to oppose the gravel pit. The impact of the **entire Metamora Village Council** in person - voicing your unwavering opposition to the gravel pit would be historic and unprecedented and it will surely galvanize and embolden the effort to stop the gravel pit dead in its tracks.
4. Council will direct Village Legal counsel to provide any support to the Township that may be needed throughout the review process and any subsequent litigation.
5. Council must hire an expert consultant to determine the extent of the very serious consequences that a gravel mining operation of this magnitude would have on the village of Metamora. This analysis should include (but not necessarily be limited to) a review of property value impact, the effect of noise, dust and vibration to the village center (which has been on the National Historic Register since 1964) along with the impact (short and long term) on the business environment in the village. The analysis should be completed in a timely manner and provided to Metamora Township so that it may be considered as part of their review process.
6. Council must allocate **\$200,000** to be “given” to Metamora Township in support of fighting the gravel pit. Please note that conditions would



need to be established (e.g. funds to be used to stop vs. compromise, that the village funds are used in an allocated ratio along with Township and other funding sources, etc.) in advance of any binding financial commitment of village funds to the Township.

While \$200,000 may seem like an over-sized financial commitment in support of the Township legal efforts – the village council must consider the magnitude of lost tax revenue should the gravel pit be approved. The property values of residential and business properties would immediately decline – and with that decline there would be a commensurate decline in tax revenue. Over the 20 – 30 life of the gravel mining operation, the loss in tax revenue to the village would greatly exceed \$200,000. Thus, an initial “investment” of \$200,000 of village of Metamora taxes in support of Metamora Township fighting the gravel pit is actually a shrewd financial maneuver that will protect the financial integrity of the village of Metamora tax base.

Every effort will be made to enlist similar financial support for Metamora Township from additional stakeholders. These include the Metamora DDA, Dryden Township, the village of Dryden, the Dryden DDA, various private citizen groups, the Metamora Chamber of Commerce, the Lapeer Economic Development Corporation among others, with the **goal** to be providing Metamora Township with **~\$1 million** in combined supplemental funding to help in hiring expert consultants, pay for legal fees, or assist in covering any additional financial burdens that the Township may incur in stopping the gravel pit. Metamora Township must know that **we stand together** to fight a development that will result in the end of the way of life that the village has enjoyed for over 160 years!

7. Council will establish regular communication/meetings with Metamora Township, Dryden Township, village of Dryden, Metamora DDA, Dryden DDA, Metamora Chamber of Commerce, and any additional governmental stakeholders that will be negatively impacted by this mining operation.

This gravel pit **can be** stopped and **must be** stopped. This is not the time for half-measures, delay, compromise or ambivalence. Your responsibility to your current and future constituents is clear - Stop the Pit! Make no mistake – we are in the fight of our lives - for the very survival of the village of Metamora. Do not delude yourselves into thinking that the



impact of gravel trains rolling through the downtown "...won't be that bad" and that they can be tolerated – or that people will still want to live in the village even though dozens and dozens and dozens of gravel trucks will be relentlessly rumbling through the village every day from 6:00am to 6:00pm. Metamora will become a place **not** to live. A place **not** to visit. A place that is **not** worth the drive. A place where businesses fail and a place that becomes a footnote in history. This is the time for the village council to make the commitment to help stop the gravel pit, or risk forever being known as the village residents that presided over the destruction of the village of Metamora. Chose instead to do the right thing – to provide every measure of support possible – to be courageous and bold – and to be known as the council that helped save the village and enabled it to prosper for another 160 years.

Dutifully Yours,



Linda Egeland
Owner – White Horse Inn
Resident Dryden Township



Victor Dzenowagis
Owner – White Horse Inn
Resident Dryden Township

cc: Supervisor Metamora Township

