

Freedom Township Planning Commission  
Public Hearing  
September 3, 2013

These minutes are not approved until our next meeting.

Chairman Lindemann called the public hearing to order at 7:10p.m.

Roll Call: Matt Little, Carol Huehl, Dan Schaible, Susan Ochs and Larry Lindemann were all present. Planners Bill DeGroot and Rodney Nanney were present also.

A motion was made by Little with support from Schaible to open the public hearing for the expansion special use permit application for Stoneco.

Steve Lemons showed us on a map the areas we were talking about.

Karen Flahie- Where is traffic going and will it be the same amount of traffic or more?

Answer – Yes same entrance and amount of traffic. They will be doing land balancing basically and no anticipation for more gravel trains. The floor of the pit is 940’.

Karen Flahie- How long for excavation?

Answer- 4 to 5 years.

Karen Flahie- Where is Steve working now?

Answer- He works for both sides (Waterland and Stoneco) but is helping Stoneco with this.

Lori Maxwell- I live on the South side of the lake and I hear beep, beep at 5:30 a.m... There needs to be more regulations and enforcement. Whatever we do put some meat into this to have a way of enforcing these rules.

Answer-Alvin Ernst has been called and has gone to take decibel reading.

Lori Maxwell- If we don’t have enforcement there is no sense in making regulations.

Bill DeGroot- Sometimes outside normal realm when I94 or major work is going out.

Larry Lindemann-If no one calls or lets us know about complaints we have no way of knowing of any problems or concerns.

Bill DeGroot- We do have Township Ordinances that can be investigated.

Lori Maxwell- “Put some meat into the ordinances.” There needs to be fines for when the ordinances are not followed.

Steve Lemons – There is new technology about back up beepers and now have cameras being installed.

Beth Heuser – So there will be no changes to the entrance on Pleasant Lake Road. Why are the truckers not stopping at the stop signs?

Answer by Larry Lindemann – We have contacted the State Police about this matter.

Beth Heuser – Could we put a sign that warns of truck traffic?

Larry Lindemann – Would have to talk to Washtenaw County Road Department. We tried to get numbers put on the trucks. So many of the pits have gotten away from their own truckers. Truckers are now independents.

Stan Tschiltz – Is this area within the current Waterland property?

Answer – no, this is a new area.

Norm Maxwell – Gravel Pits have no control on Truck Drivers.

Larry Lindemann – Haul Routes are in the ordinance. Most routes go East unless they have a delivery to the West and then they would go that way. The Township used to get tipping fees; however, the State Act took this away. We then went to reclamation bonds because the State said it was unfair to charge tipping fees.

Sharon Haeussler – How will I be able to sell my house when excavating starts next to my house?

Answer – We could do some screening.

Dale Sawyer – Eastern mining limits – setbacks to the South have 200’ setbacks. At the renewal for the Eastern property a closer mining limit was allowed.

Karen Flahie – “Listening to all of this the Township is saying, nothing we can do about it, nothing we can do about it.”

Rodney Nanney – Records are built when Police get calls. These calls are very useful. This will make a difference over the long term. Same way with the Enforcement Officer, he needs to get these calls.

Bill DeGroot – The Planning Commission has limited resources. The power resides with the Township Board to enforce. We do take comments seriously. Municipal Infraction is our limit as a Township.

Lori Maxwell – I want our ordinances to have more teeth and need it at the start and not at the end.

Bill DeGroot – We have all this in place. We have opportunities to issue tickets on site. A Civil infraction by State Law is \$500.00. We are going through the Zoning Ordinance renewal now. Planners have done training sessions on the ordinance and would recommend this to us.

Rodney Nanney – There have been changes in Lansing that effect Gravel Pits. They reinstated how The Township can regulate. We need to educate our Legislators. The Township has limited ability to say no to gravel mining.

Karen Flahie – I want a list of Pit Operators and their phone numbers.

Larry Lindemann – It is on our website right now.

Karen Flahie – When will Kothe Road be opening?

Sue Hanf – Nothing planned for opening it right now. There are many complications.

Matt Little – When gravel is sold to contractor say at the airport. Who contracts the carrier?

Answer – In most instances carrier is person that contract is with. There is an independent carrier that’s contracted by the buyer of the gravel.

Matt Little – How do we regulate independent drivers? Matt would like when a driver gets his orders to come to Freedom Township they would say “Oh no, they really watch what we do.”

Dan Schaible commented on Legal loads saying they can't let a load go out over the weight limit.

Need to contact the Motor Carrier for complaints. We will get a phone number and post on the website.

Stan Tschiltz – How much is the expanded operation going to get the Township in fee?

Answer – Don't have the actual figures right now.

Stan Tschiltz – Seems that the Township should recoup expenses from the gravel operations.

Gravel pits make money taking gravel out so the Township should make money too.

Larry Lindemann – Gravel pits have paid for things in the past; like, Attorney fees, inspections by Township Engineer, etc. There are costs built in, not just using General Fund.

Steve Lemons – Spoke about the change in management. Stoneco is a larger company and can bring in better equipment thus making the operation better by having larger resources.

There were no more comments.

Chairman Larry Lindemann closed the Public Hearing at 8:30p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Ann Huehl, secretary