

09 September 2024

To: Ledyard P&Z Commission

From: Nora Taylor, 9 Partridge Hollow Road, Gales Ferry, CT 06335

RE: Cashman/GFI - Application to add to existing Special Use Permit: "Excavation Operation, Major" for heavy industrial Rock Quarry Operation at Mt. Decatur

Regarding Cashman/GFI's proposal for a heavy industrial special use permit for a ten year blasting and shipping out of Mt. Decatur's rock (aka, Rock Quarry operations), my comments below pertain to referencing a few of the Ledyard Zoning Regulations. I ask that the Commission thoroughly consider the many applicable regs that are in place, before deciding to grant or not grant the addition to the existing Special Use Permit. Is the Applicant presenting a plan that meets the burden of proof that the current regulations can be met?

In reading the applicable zoning regulations dated "Amended through January 2, 2024," for this requested special use permit, I do not understand how this type of heavy industrial operation could satisfy the regulations as they are currently written. I site just a few here:

- Regulation **8.16 EXCAVATION - 8.16.D** - "The work will not be a source of dust, pollution, and/or siltation. The site will not be generally characterized by unsightliness as evidenced by open pits, rubble, or other indications of completed digging operations which would have a deteriorating influence on nearby property values."
  - This regulation speaks for itself. I do not believe anyone could argue the fact that having a rock quarry operation abutting residences and close to large neighborhoods, schools, churches, town, the River, etc. will not have a deteriorating influence on nearby property values.
- **CHAPTER 9: Site Development Standards - Reg. 9.1:** "Site design requirements are intended to protect public health, safety, welfare and property values and natural resources."
  - Is there specific documentation from/of the Applicant's intent to protect public health, safety, welfare and property values and natural resources that satisfies the specific regulation? How can what they are proposing protect public health and quality of life?
- **9.2.C** "Performance Standards: Uses shall be designed to minimize any injury or nuisance to nearby premises by reason of noise, vibration, radiation, fire and explosive hazard..."
  - Sound travels, especially across open space and open water (thinking of our Montville neighbors across the Thames, as well). Rock crusher machines, trucks being loaded with heavy rock, truck noises (for example, back up alarms). Sound Travels.

- **11.3.4 SPECIAL PERMIT CRITERIA** – “The applicant shall have the burden to prove: **11.3.4.C** ...that the use(s) would not be noxious, offensive, or detrimental to the area by reason of odors, fumes, dust, noise, vibrations, appearance, or other similar reasons.”
  - A heavy industrial rock quarry operation is *nothing but* dusty, noisy and odorous – again, how has the Applicant proved that it will not be to our town, nearby residences and nearby schools?

The Commission, nearby residents of the site, including churches, schools, and the town of Gales Ferry deserve to know/to be shown, examples to the public (at the hearing, ie, videos of similar operations) exactly what can be expected regarding the types of heavy industrial operations that will be taking place daily in the area known as Mt. Decatur.

In my opinion, the “Excavation Operation, Major” Special Use Permit Application should be denied, as the scope of the proposed operations by the Applicant is not fitting for our small town or nearby residential community and does not meet current zoning regulations.

I am not opposed to Economic development for Gales Ferry. However, the development should be fitting to our town and our community. We are not a heavy industrial area. Just the opposite. Our “quiet neighbor,” Dow, operated for decades as an unintrusive, non-destructive neighbor. This rock quarry operation would be completely the opposite. Dow: manufacturing Styrofoam vs. Cashman/GFI: Blasting Stone/Rock. As our opportunities for economic development arise, we need to be sure that as commercial businesses are being proposed to P&Z, they be no more industrial than what we have currently in Gales Ferry so as not to disrupt or drastically change our community. In other words, heavy Industrial work operations have no place in Gales Ferry’s beautiful, historical, residential small town.

My hope is that the Commission will press the Applicant to provide more detailed information than has already been presented, as I do not believe what has been presented satisfies the required current regulations.

Respectfully,  
*Nora Taylor*