

20 November, 2024

I am writing to express my extreme opposition to the plan by Cashman et al, to turn Mt. Decatur into a gravel pit.

As a retired Engineering Project Specialist who has worked in many industrial settings, I can categorically state that - regardless of the propaganda published by Cashman and their contracted consultants - there are absolutely no economical procedures that can be put in place long term to mitigate blasting noise or dust, or to prevent overflow debris from falling off trucks. No matter how diligent the employee or detailed the procedure, there is *always* a measurable failure rate..... A_0 is *never* equal to Zero. And, as the length of the operation increases, the failure rate increases.

Cashman has implied they will be a good neighbor, implementing a number of measures to ensure vehicles leaving the property will be "clean"; washing of vehicles, inspection, etc. I'm a cynic, as well as a realist. These protocols will be enforced only long enough to assuage opponents, but will undoubtedly diminish over time to reduce operating costs. Consequently, the amount of noise, dirt, dust, and traffic will increase, as will the monetary and quality of life expense to the Town and affected residents.

Even now one can sit at the corner of Rte. 12 and Long Cove to watch the silica dust blow off uncovered trucks as they depart the mine on Baldwin Hill. As an avid cyclist, I have regularly noted spillage of silica on the shoulders, which motorists would not be aware of. Load covers function, to a certain extent, but only if they are actively deployed. Gales Ferry already has one quarry that does not enforce common sense safety measures, I see no reason why we should expect compliance from a new player.

Area residents who rely on well water, which I assume to be the vast majority, will have at least 10 years of anxiety regarding the integrity of their wells, which are quite expensive to repair/replace. At the very least, I demand the Town include detailed and comprehensive remediation plans for restoration of homeowner wells in any blasting permit issued to Cashman et-al.

Many years ago Dow Chemical floated a plan to install a gas fired co-generation plant on the Allyn's Point property, which was soundly criticized by local residents and eventually abandoned. However, as an outcome of many meetings on this proposal, Dow formed a Community Advisory Panel (CAP), of which I was a member for many years, comprised of fence-line neighbors, SUBASE representatives, and other community stakeholders. Many long standing issues were discussed at these meetings, and quite a few were resolved due to the dialogue between Dow management and the panelists. Panelists had access to Dow management and were known by Dow security, which allowed free and easy communications and rapid response to emerging issues. Many Dow managers resided in Ledyard or Gales Ferry, so they had a personal stake in ensuring open communications. I would strongly advise the Town to include a line item *in all* permits for Cashman et al requiring establishment of a similar CAP, especially since the proposed uses for the Allyn's Point property are, shall we say, extraordinary to the area.

I am not opposed to expanding the tax base of Ledyard. I am, however, ardently opposed to turning Mt. Decatur into a crater. As one of the closest neighbors to Allyn's Point, my wife and I will have our retirement disrupted six days out of seven by the blasting, the excess truck traffic, noise, dust and dirt proposed by Cashman. There must be cleaner and environmentally safer means to expand the tax base without drastically and forever changing Gales Ferry. Once this travesty is approved there will be no turning back. I urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to reject these ridiculous plans.



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