

January 13, 2007

#E1-2751
RJA

Finance Docket # 34284

received
1/29/07

Dear Ms. Rutson:

First of all, I am totally against a quarry and railroad in the Quihi area.

If there is no other alternative, the Eastern route is by far the best for the railroad. This would keep it out of our flood plain and Historical District and artifacts area in accordance with Dr. Hester, a professor at UT.

Enclosed is a clipping (dated 6 Jan 2007) of problems in Comal County quarries located near New Braunfels.

We will have the same problems here.

Archie R. Gerdes

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Comal official proposes a quarry commission

It would provide public input to operators on a regular basis.

BY ROGER CROTEAU
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

NEW BRAUNFELS — Comal County Judge Danny Scheel proposed creating a quarry commission at a public meeting Wednesday night to meet periodically with representatives of three local limestone quarries to discuss residents' complaints.

"Rather than everyone carrying their own torch, if we come together as a group, we can get more done," Scheel suggested. "And I know from talking to these guys (quarry officials) they are willing to listen."

Scheel said the county commissioners could appoint the committee, if the district attorney says the Commissioners Court has that power.

Darrell Brownlow, director of geology at the Cemex quarry, said he welcomes the public input.

"You want to complain," he said. "Well, what is that going to get you? It's going to get you a lot. We are going to listen to that feedback and it will effect change."

About 125 neighbors of the three quarries peppered the officials from the Cemex, Martin Marietta and Chemical Lime quarries with questions and com-

plaints at the Oak Run School on Wednesday night.

Residents worried that vibrations from the blasts can damage their home foundations and wells, and dust from the operations could harm their health.

"A lot of us feel you are not good neighbors," said one man, who refused to give his name. "This is a wonderful community and I've been here a long time. And it's maybe not as wonderful as it used to be."

The quarry officials explained steps they have taken to reduce dust emissions from their plants and the care they take to keep ground vibrations from the blasting to a minimum. They said it is difficult for residents to distinguish the "air blast" caused by the pressure wave from the exploding rock, from ground vibrations, which are more likely to damage property.

While they try to limit the air blast effect as well, it can be difficult, because wind, cloud cover, temperature inversions, the direction of the wall being blasted and many other factors can greatly effect how much air blast neighbors experience.

"Having cracks in your masonry is a natural phenomenon," Brownlow said. "I live 35 miles from a quarry and I have them. I'm not saying it's impossible, but living near a quarry does not exempt you from natural reasons for having that problem."

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