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Irish Hills mining site proposal sparks controversy, more than 100 people attend Cambridge Twp. meeting



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By: [Joe Gebhardt](#)

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CAMBRIDGE TOWNSHIP, Mich. — A proposed aggregate gravel mine in the Irish Hills area has some residents feeling concerned.

It was up for discussion at Wednesday night's Cambridge Township Planning Commission meeting.

Township officials are being asked to approve a gravel mine near several lake communities.

At least 100 people were in the Township Hall for the meeting. Police had to lock the doors to not let anyone else in saying they were at max capacity.

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neighbors not a corporation because they say it isn't what the opposers think it is. They say it will simply blend in with the surrounding environment.

They say their end game is 12 residential units with each lot around four acres surrounded by a new man-made lake. The area is currently surrounded by seven lakes.

"I know I'm not going to be welcomed with open arms, but I ask for the opportunity to prove that I am not the monster that is being painted in so many social media aspects," developer Timothy Warvel said.

They're looking at a five-year proposal to get the project done.

According to a grassroots opposition group, [Protect the Irish Hills](#), mining will be sunrise to sundown for six days a week. They say it could contaminate lakes and groundwater and wells would go dry.



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“Who really wins if this gravel pit is allowed to operate? We don’t, the township won’t and neither will the state. The only winner will be the gravel pit’s beneficiaries,” resident Sandra SanFillippo said.

“I have great neighbors on Kelly Lake, and if they ran their lawn mower, their chainsaw, their equipment from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. every day, I would not call them my good neighbor. I would not have a beer with someone that’s going to make noise from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and as Judge Judy says, don’t pee on my leg and tell me it’s raining,” resident Cindy Ashmeyer said.

Opponents also have health concerns. According to Pangea Environment, the state is conducting a health study around an unrelated mine in Grass Lake Township due to an apparent cluster of illnesses in that area.

“We have sampled these sites several times, especially in this area over the past 20 years, and I can tell you in my experience in those instances as long as these fugitive dust plans are in place the amount of silica is essentially zero at the property boundaries. Everything is kept in site,” a SSP Mining geologist said.



Pangea Environmental

Phase 1 is outlined in red. Pink is total acreage owned and planned to mined in future.

The opposers say 100-ton gravel trailers will be constantly on the U.S. 12 Heritage Highway.

The Cambridge Township Planning Commission has tabled the decision until their January 2023 meeting.

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