

Submitted by: Crystal Crisp
Homeowner, Hickory Meadows
Date: July 6th, 2026

My name is Crystal Crisp, and I am a homeowner in the Hickory Meadows subdivision in Hardin Valley. I respectfully submit these comments regarding Case 7-B-26-UR and ask that they be included in the official public record.

I recognize that aggregate is an essential construction material and that quarry operations serve an important role in supporting infrastructure and development throughout Knox County. My comments are not intended to question the importance of the aggregate industry or the existence of the existing quarry. Rather, they focus on the specific request before the Planning Commission: whether expanding this industrial operation by approximately 57.8 acres closer to established and growing residential neighborhoods has been demonstrated to be compatible with the surrounding community and in the public interest.

After reviewing the application, I respectfully believe significant questions remain unanswered. While the application contains extensive discussion regarding the operational benefits of the proposed expansion, the regional demand for aggregate, and the regulatory framework governing quarry operations, I found comparatively little discussion addressing how this expansion will affect the residents who already live immediately adjacent to the quarry and those who will soon live in neighborhoods Knox County has already approved.

As I understand it, the Planning Commission's responsibility extends beyond determining whether quarry operations comply with state and federal regulations. Those agencies regulate blasting, mining operations, air quality, water quality, and stormwater management.

The Planning Commission has a different responsibility.

The Commission must determine whether this proposed land use is appropriate at this location, whether it is compatible with surrounding development, and whether it serves the public interest. I feel this distinction is important.

Throughout the application, Vulcan Materials explains why aggregate is important to the region, why the expansion benefits its operations, and how existing regulations apply to quarry activities. Those are important considerations. However, regulatory compliance alone does not answer the planning question before this Commission.

The question before you is not simply whether the quarry can operate within regulatory requirements. The question is whether expanding industrial quarry operations closer to established and newly approved residential neighborhoods is compatible with the surrounding community.

After reviewing the application, I respectfully do not believe that showing has been made.

Residential Growth and Compatibility

One of my greatest concerns is the apparent inconsistency between Knox County's continued approval of residential growth in Hardin Valley and this request to expand industrial quarry operations closer to those same neighborhoods.

Hickory Meadows is an established residential community. In addition, Knox County has already approved an approximately 95-home Ball Homes development immediately adjacent to Hickory Meadows that will connect directly to our neighborhood.

Those future homeowners deserve the same thoughtful consideration as the families who already live here today.

If Knox County has determined that this area is appropriate for continued residential growth, I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to carefully consider how approving an almost 60-acre expansion of industrial quarry operations is consistent with that long-term planning vision.

The decision before the Commission will affect not only today's residents but also future generations who will call Hardin Valley home.

Review of the Applicant's Representations

The application states that the proposed expansion will not increase overall production, customer demand, customer truck traffic, or alter the existing processing facilities, while simultaneously requesting approval to expand quarry operations by approximately 57.8 acres.

As a nearby homeowner, I respectfully struggle to understand how these representations fit together.

If this expansion truly will not increase production, customer demand, or truck traffic, I respectfully ask the Commission to understand why an expansion of this magnitude is necessary and whether the application has adequately explained the basis for those conclusions.

The application also states that blasting operations generally occur **a few times per month**. This statement is significant because it differs from what many residents, understood during Vulcan's public outreach effort where residents were informed that blasting typically occurs **a few times per month**, and local media similarly reported that frequency. The application, however, describes blasting of **up to one to two times per week**.

While I recognize that "up to" does not necessarily mean blasting will occur every week, there is a substantial difference between one to two blasts per month and up to one to two blasts per week. That distinction is important because it directly affects how nearby residents evaluate the potential impacts of this proposal on our homes, families, and quality of life.

I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to clarify which representation accurately reflects current and anticipated blasting operations before making a decision.

Furthermore, if blasting may occur up to one to two times per week while the applicant also concludes there will be no increase in production, customer demand, or truck traffic, I respectfully believe the application should more clearly explain how those operational representations relate to one another.

Issues I Believe Warrant Additional Consideration

After carefully reviewing the application, I respectfully believe several important issues receive little or no meaningful discussion considering the significance of this request.

Existing and Future Residential Neighborhoods

The application provides considerable discussion regarding the operational benefits of the expansion and the regional need for aggregate. However, I found comparatively little discussion regarding the residents who already live adjacent to the quarry and those who will soon move into newly approved residential developments nearby.

Property Values

For many homeowners, purchasing a home represents the largest financial investment they will ever make. While I cannot state what effect this proposal may or may not have on nearby property values, I believe it is significant that the application does not appear to include an analysis of potential impacts on surrounding residential property values or explain why such an analysis was not performed.

Cumulative Impacts

The application discusses blasting, buffers, stormwater, traffic, and other operational elements individually. However, I respectfully question whether it adequately evaluates the cumulative effect these activities may have on nearby neighborhoods over the life of the proposed expansion.

Resident's experience these impacts collectively, not individually.

Buffers and Berms

The application relies heavily on buffers and vegetated berms to reduce visual impacts. While these measures may help screen quarry operations from view, they do not eliminate concerns regarding blasting vibration, dust, operational noise, or the overall quality of life experienced by nearby residents. The application should also be required to address the visual impacts to nearby homes. A 25-foot berm is not sufficient to meaningfully protect residents from the visual intrusion of expanded quarry operations, equipment, disturbed land, stockpiles, and industrial activity so close to residential neighborhoods. Vulcan should be required to construct and maintain a much larger berm, along with dense vegetative screening, to better shield surrounding homes and reduce the long-term visual impact on the community. A minimal berm may meet a basic design proposal, but it does not adequately protect homeowners who will be forced to live beside this operation every day.

Even at a much larger scale visual screening should not be confused with compatibility.

Stormwater and Hickory Creek

The application discusses stormwater management associated with the proposed expansion. Given the proximity of Hickory Creek and existing drainage concerns experienced by some nearby

residents, I respectfully ask the Commission to carefully consider the long-term impacts of additional land disturbance on surrounding waterways and downstream properties.

Benefits to the Applicant vs. Benefits to the Community

One observation continued to stand out as I reviewed the application.

The application contains extensive discussion regarding the benefits of the proposed expansion to Vulcan Materials, including operational efficiency, access to additional reserves, and the regional demand for aggregate.

However, I found comparatively little discussion regarding how this proposal benefits or protects the nearby residential communities that will live with its long-term impacts.

Rather than demonstrating compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods, much of the application explains why the expansion benefits the applicant.

I respectfully believe those are different questions.

The Planning Commission is not only asked to consider whether the proposal benefits Vulcan Materials. It must also determine whether expanding industrial quarry operations is compatible with surrounding residential development and serves the broader public interest.

I recognize that quarry operations are an important part of Knox County's economy and that aggregate is necessary to support continued growth.

My comments are not intended to suggest otherwise.

Rather, after carefully reviewing the application, I respectfully do not believe the applicant has demonstrated that this proposed expansion is compatible with the surrounding residential community or that it adequately addresses the long-term interests of the homeowners and families who already live here or those who will soon call this area home.

I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to carefully consider whether the applicant has met its burden of demonstrating compatibility with surrounding residential development and whether the public interest is best served by approving this request.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the Planning Commission recommend denial of Case 7-B-26-UR.

Thank you for your time, your service, and your thoughtful consideration of these comments.

Respectfully,

Crystal Crisp