

Friday, August 7, 2026

I appreciate Vulcan has offered additional conditions intended to reduce the impacts of this expansion. While I recognize those efforts, they do not address the fundamental question before the Planning Commission; whether expanding a quarry in this location is consistent with Knox County's long-term vision for this area. I do not believe it is. The additional setbacks, berms, landscaping, screening, and monitoring acknowledge that this expansion will impact neighboring residents, but mitigation measures do not change an incompatible land use into a compatible one.

When my family chose to purchase our home, we reviewed the Knox County Growth Policy and the KGIS Future Land Use. Those adopted planning documents identified this area as Rural, not an area intended mining or industrial. Like many families, we relied on the same planning framework that guided the County's decisions for this area. The County approved Hickory Meadows consistent with those adopted plans, and prospective homeowners relied on those very same plans when deciding whether to purchase homes in this community. Residents should be able to trust that the County's adopted plans have meaning and provide a reasonable expectation of how surrounding land will develop.

That is why it is difficult for me to reconcile this proposal with the County's previous planning decisions. The same planning framework that supported this residential subdivision is now being asked to support expanding a quarry that will allow blasting just a few hundred feet from homes. If this quarry expansion had been proposed before Hickory Meadows, I question whether a residential subdivision would have been approved in such close proximity to drilling and blasting operations. To approve this expansion now would undermine the very planning documents that both the County and homeowners relied upon. That inconsistency is exactly why I believe this proposal is not compatible with the County's long-term vision for this area.

If the Growth Policy and Future Land Use identified this area as Rural when Hickory Meadows was approved, and those very same planning documents still identify it as Rural today, what has changed that now makes a quarry expansion compatible with the County's vision?

This is not a choice between growth and no growth. Growth should occur in locations that are consistent with the County's adopted plans and compatible with surrounding land uses. Approving this expansion would send the message that the County's long-range planning documents can be set aside after families have relied on them to purchase homes. If that happens, those plans lose the certainty and purpose they are intended to provide.

I respectfully ask the Planning Commission to uphold the County's Growth Policy and Future Land Use Plan by denying this Use on Review application. Doing so would honor the planning vision that residents relied upon, protect the integrity of the County's adopted plans, and ensure that future growth remains consistent, predictable, and compatible with the communities it affects.

Thank you,

Crystal Crisp