

To Whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the upcoming referendum! I am a recent transplant from NY state to West Pawlet and have purchased a Historic home built prior to 1900. I am a telecommuter and work from a home office. Recently it came to my attention that a long dormant slate quarry off of route 153 approximately 100 to 200 feet from my property is re-opening. I only found out from the noise and was not notified by the company, town, or state. It has been quite a change as they are digging from around 7:30/8AM to around 5PM, 7 days a week. My youngest of three(3,6, and 9) children is afraid to go outside some days due to the noise and they haven't started blasting. So i did some research and called the ACT 250 office to which i was told they have no jurisdiction over them as they are exempt. It is also worrisome that i cannot find any agency in the state or local government that regulates the digging or blasting. This is curious as there was a local home owner building a shed inside variances and the town had posted a comment period of 10 days for anyone in opposition. There is also laws barring individuals from discharging firearms within certain areas around homes. So i can't build a shed or fire a gun near a property but can discharge explosives anywhere i want as long as i filed paperwork 30 to 40 years ago. My children routinely play outside all over my property and with no regulation or warning could be injured by one of these blasts if something goes awry.

So i made way back to the site and spoke to the owner of Newmont Slate and he said they would sometimes warn neighbors or sound a horn. This worries me as i have no way to tell where my children may be when this occurs. I believe federal law states that any residence within one half of a mile should be warned at least 10 days in advance and have options of having seismic detection devices placed on buildings to ensure the blasting is safe. I am not one to usually comment on what people do on there land, but with the lack of protection of my property and neighbors properties i felt i must tell someone. Please help me keep my children safe. If not i feel i may have to relocate my family back to NY to ensure they can grow up in an area where explosions and the sounds of machinery don't impact their daily quality of life.

Sincerely,

Joshua from West Pawlet