Statement to Clark County Council by Katie Jarvis

Re: Yacolt Mountain Quarry Overlay Expansion (CPZ2018-00001)

Four of my neighbors and I met with Councilor Eileen Quiring on November 26. The same Clark County residents, plus dozens of others, attended the Clark County Council hearing on November 27. Each event dealt with the proposed Yacolt Mountain Quarry Overlay Expansion.

These topics were addressed: potential carcinogens in quarry dust, run-off into the Lewis River, landslide risk, blasting noise, rock crushing noise, and the wear/tear/noise/danger generated by gravel trucks. The Community Development Director attested that the County was not actively enforcing the provisions of the existing conditional use permit (“oversight has been lax”). And, the planning committee recommended against the expansion. At the conclusion of the hearing, a two-pronged, razor thin “solution” was proposed by the Council. The expansion will be approved with two conditions: 1) Limit the use of the overlay to five years (then revisit the issue to consider mining gravel on the same property) and 2) develop provisions to somehow curb the wear/tear/nose/danger caused by the gravel trucks.

Excuse me? What happened to the other issues? It was as though the concerned residents were ignored; as if they never participated in the hearing.

Another question was asked of Councilor Quiring during the November 26 meeting which remained unaddressed at the hearing: Are the sales taxes generated by the sale of gravel benefitting Clark County or Cowlitz County (where the operator’s sales office resides)? Now that Storedahl is exploiting the gravel resource, the deferral is over and the property taxes should be significant. Those taxes will help the County mitigate the cost of road damage, exacerbated by the gravel trucks.

Will citizens who attend the upcoming hearing on December 11 be allowed to voice objections to the proposed razor thin “solution”? Honestly, it’s not a “solution”. It’s a disgrace.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.