

2/18/26

Thank you for offering the opportunity for last week's hearing to Alna residents regarding the proposed Mining Ordinance. It is obvious that many hours have been spent creating the document and Alna applauds your efforts. I found it telling that the majority of those who spoke, were in favor of several changes to the "amended" ordinance you are proposing. I hope their comments made as much sense to you as they did to me.

So much of what Alna has done (and not done) over the past several years is now showing effects on the nature of our town. It was very disheartening to see the 3-4 enlarged photos showing what has transpired in the last 25-30 years in just the Crooker pit. The growth of its size is staggering and the proposed ordinance provides little to protect against further degradation.

Many have provided their thoughts regarding the ordinance already and this is simply my agreement to what has been offered. Particularly egregious to me is the one time 25% expansion allowed in the proposed ordinance. This is truly a gift to any larger operations that may have the capabilities to meet some of the more strict requirements, while other small operations are penalized. I am in agreement with others that have espoused prohibiting all new operations entirely.

Much has been said about the ancillary effects of mining operations in general. Our roads are degraded, peace and quiet is interrupted, our waters are compromised, and travel is more dangerous - this all due to blasting (both sound and vibration) and the trucking of product along our country roads.

I have no ill will toward Crooker Construction. I do, however, feel that they offer little to Alna yet benefit immensely at Alna's expense. I had not really compared taxes in Alna until mine rose 36% in the last two years. Our property is 2 3/4 +/- acres and we have a modest house. We pay more than Crooker construction. Somehow, that does not compute for us nor does it compute for many others with whom I have had discussions. While this disparity has little bearing on the mining ordinance proper, it certainly does not make me desire to offer them any further allowances in any direction.

Lastly, small town clerks are often such gifts to the fabric of small towns. They have to wear many hats completing their numerous duties. In Alna, they have done so well, even when challenged. New challenges such as land use and its rules and regulations should not be added to their plate(s) but, rather, be handled by either the CEO or Planning Board, both of whom have the necessary knowledge and understanding of land use ordinances.

Thank you for your time.

Tom Aldrich