



EAST ROCKHILL TOWNSHIP

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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September 17, 2020

Via Electronic Mail

Gary A. Latsha
District Mining Manager
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Environmental Protection
Pottsville District Mining Office
5 West Laurel Boulevard
Pottsville, PA 17901

Re: Response to Hanson Aggregates Pennsylvania LLC's Letter, dated August 14, 2020

Dear Mr. Latsha:

East Rockhill Township (the "Township") is in receipt of a letter, dated August 14, 2020, from Hanson Aggregates Pennsylvania LLC ("Hanson"), providing transmission electron microscopy ("TEM") and petrographic analysis of rock samples that were originally collected at the Rock Hill Quarry (the "Site") in April 2019. The analyses were to be conducted in accordance with the protocols set forth in a letter from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (the "Department") to the Township, dated August 4, 2020. The Township is also in receipt of a Technical Memorandum prepared by Dr. Bradley G. Erskine of Erskine Environmental Consulting ("EEC Memo"), which provides comments on Hanson's letter, dated August 14, 2020.

The Township emphasizes that its residents are deeply concerned about the presence of asbestos at the Site. On December 5, 2018, upon the Department's discovery of a positive asbestos sample result, the Department issued an order to Hanson to cease all mining and rock crushing activity at the Site. Beginning more than a year ago, the Township and the Rockhill Environmental Preservation Alliance ("REPA") have sent a significant number of letters and reports from their separate consultants addressing the proper protocols for analyzing the health risks associated with asbestos contained in aggregate at the Site. On September 20, 2019, based on information provided by the Township and REPA, the Department sent a letter to Hanson requesting that Hanson conduct TEM on all rock samples that Hanson previously collected at the Site; prepare samples for petrographic analysis; and resample at all of the water sampling locations. Hanson responded by letter dated October 3, 2019, arguing that they should not have to comply with the Department's requests. The Department several times extended Hanson's deadline to respond to the Department's letter, dated September 20, 2019. Nearly a year later, Hanson has provided its response, by letter dated August 14, 2020.

According to the EEC Memo, Hanson has again attempted to significantly underreport the concentration of asbestos in aggregate at the Site by removing the majority of countable fibers from the reporting of asbestos and by failing to combine fibers classified as asbestos and non-asbestos cleavage fragments. According to information provided in Hanson's letter, the samples contain as much as 13% amphibole asbestos and as much as 81% amphibole cleavage. When considering all countable asbestos fibers, almost all of the samples contained asbestos, which stands in stark contrast to the much lower concentrations originally reported by Hanson for the same samples. Furthermore, as the EEC Memo explains, Hanson's reporting demonstrates that fibrous actinolite is ubiquitous across the diabase at the Site, which contradicts Hanson's earlier

statement in its Qualitative Geologic Survey Report that “detectable concentrations of asbestos are not present in the diabase rock and rarely in the infrequent actinolite mineral veins.” As a result, the EEC Memo concludes that “mining operations at the Rock Hill quarry has a significant potential for adverse exposure to Rockhill Township residents, particularly to sensitive receptors such as children who live or attend school near the site.” The EEC Memo’s conclusion is consistent with a letter issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, dated February 7, 2020, which specifically states that asbestos at the Site “should be avoided and left alone” and to “[a]void blasting it, crushing it, or grinding it up.” The Township, through its consultants, has reviewed the EEC Memo and agrees with its conclusions.

As the Township has previously emphasized, the Township and its residents need confirmation that the Department does not intend to allow mining activity to recommence at the Site. The Township has limited resources and, for planning purposes, develops prospective budgets that allocate those resources, including those pertaining to emergency services and infrastructure improvements. The allocation of those resources will vary dramatically depending on whether operations at the Site will recommence or remain ceased. The uncertain future status of the Site is continuing to restrict the Township’s ability to plan for the safety of its residents.

For these reasons, and those previously provided, the Township respectfully requests that the Department refrain from rescinding its cessation order and ensure that the Rock Hill Quarry does not reopen. Thank you for your consideration of the foregoing comments.

Respectfully submitted,

EAST ROCKHILL TOWNSHIP



Marianne K. Morano
Township Manager

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