

Keep neighborhood quiet

I have lived at 60 Oriole St. across from the Spring Street property that Pike Industries now owns since 1962. My husband Jim and I raised four children here.

Forty years ago, we were part of the neighborhood group that fought against Blue Rock moving all of their quarrying and asphalt operations to Spring Street. We organized and went to meetings and made signs. We fought that battle to preserve our way of life and protect our families.

Even though Blue Rock went ahead and started the quarry when they weren't supposed to, they never did move the asphalt plant there or actively quarry. In fact, for 40 years, it has been very quiet. While my children were growing up, I worked the night shift and slept during the day – it was that quiet.

Now, all these decades later, we have the same situation. And in the local paper I read that Pike Industries, now the owner of that property, says that it is unfair that the business park is being rezoned. I do not think it is unfair at all. In fact, if we wish to discuss fairness, then let's consider the neighbors who have lived adjacent to that prop-

erty for many more years than Pike has owned it.

Since Pike has owned the property, the blasting activity has begun and it has been disturbing. While I wish to acknowledge the letter that Pike has written to our community, I also want to urge the city to do the right thing – rezone that park – and to uphold the decision made 40 years ago – not to allow blasting, quarrying, and all the dirty operations that go along with this.

Our neighborhood has been quiet, despite all the growth that has happened around us, and it's only fair that it stay that way.

*Jacqueline Oliver
Westbrook*

Pike suing wrong party

Pike Industries' plans for Spring Street represent a significant threat to the future of our small farm.

It is unfortunate that a multinational corporation the size of Pike (owned by Oldcastle Materials and CRH Plc.) would file a nuisance lawsuit against the city of Westbrook. This is simply a case of Blue Rock (the prior owner) selling the property to Pike without revealing that they did not have a permit to operate a quarry on the property. Blue Rock sought a permit in 1968, and was unsuccessful. Blue

Rock then operated a very small illegal quarry for years without a permit.

Pike purchased the property from Blue Rock in December of 2005. When it was discovered in 2009 that there was no permit, Pike sued the city. Pike should be suing Blue Rock for fraudulently misrepresenting the property in the first place, and leave the city alone. It is not the city's fault that Blue Rock sold Pike a "pig in a poke."

A nuisance lawsuit to intimidate the city into providing a permit is just wrong. Pike should do what all us "little people" have to do. Fill out the form, apply for a permit and go before the Planning Board to get permission. Or, get their money back from Blue Rock.

*Warren Knight
Smiling Hill Farm
Westbrook*

Following vision key to more jobs

I live right near Pike Industries' Spring Street property, and I work in the Five Star Park, which the city is attempting to rezone. When I drove to work this morning, I saw Pike's newly planted signs that talk about the jobs that relate to Pike Industries, exclaiming "Pike = jobs."

Well, as the city's economic development director says in his marketing campaign to bolster the opportunities in Westbrook, It Starts in Westbrook. The city has a vision for its future. That vision has more to do with creating a business environment, a welcome mat, if you will, where high-tech, state-of-the-art businesses are attracted to Westbrook.

Currently, there are more than 1,850 jobs in the Five Star Industrial Park, and many of those jobs exist due to business expansion that came about because of the city's vision. In fact, many more jobs will come from rezoning the park and ensuring a better future for this part of the city.

Pike is misrepresenting this issue. Rezoning is actually the ticket to more jobs, better jobs, and a robust economic future for the city.

And for those who are already employed by Pike, they need look no further than their own employer when assigning blame for possible job loss. It was Pike who blatantly ignored the original city charter that specified appropriate operations, and why they now find themselves at odds with the city.

The Pike signs say "Pike=jobs," when they should really say "Pike = LESS jobs."

*Terrance R. Sprague
Westbrook*