

## Two wrongs don't make a right

Congratulations to the Zoning Board of Appeals for having the courage to make the right decision for Westbrook businesses and residents. By deciding unanimously to enforce the existing rules that were decided 40 years ago, they overcame enormous pressure to renege on past promises and overlook blatant violations by Pike Industries. The company's intrusive and disruptive blasting practices should not be allowed to continue. It is not healthy for residents and the workforce in the area, and incompatible with Westbrook's strategy of developing an area of high-tech business.

But, it's not over. Soon we will be entering another critical phase, as Pike is sure to appeal to the court. Neighbors, businesses, and concerned citizens must continue to keep abreast of this issue and be involved in insuring a good, healthy, quality of life for nearby residents and a friendly environment for business operations.

I believe that we are at the precipice of a renaissance in Westbrook, and I am enthusiastic about the strides that have been made. I am a resident of Birdland, and a proud employee of Idexx Laboratories, so I am in the unique position of seeing the extreme adverse impact a new quarry with ramped-up blasting

would have in both situations. Quite simply, if this had been allowed to move forward, businesses would be forced to move out, and residents' property values would go down. It would fly in the face of any city economic growth and development goals.

Granted, the whole Pike argument revolves around the premise that, since no one from city government enforced the rules, and they continued to blast on an ongoing basis for 40 years, they should be allowed to continue. While, subjectively, this sounds reasonable, its logic is faulty. There was likely misbehavior on both sides. Pike continued along, blasting sparingly so as to not "rock the boat," and, for whatever reason, the city chose to turn a blind eye to its operations. Now, 40 years later, this has come to a head. Regardless of mistakes made on both sides, it's time to return to the original rules and abide by them and do what's best for the area as a whole.

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*Terry Sprague  
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