

Citizens for Balanced Growth in Westbrook

Working for Jobs and Economic Fairness

Dear Westbrook Citizen:

You've heard the expression "What's fair is fair". It's easy to understand and a good code to live by.

But when we see what the City of Westbrook is doing to Pike Industries by trying to shut down its Spring Street Quarry, there is no way that anyone can say that the City is being fair. And it makes no sense to shut down businesses, lose good jobs and valuable tax revenue when we are laying off employees in the school department because times are tight.

The unfairness of the City's action is shown by the fact that the City once owned and operated this quarry itself. Further, the City issued a permit for this quarry in 1968 – before men landed on the moon. The State permitted the quarry in 1971. Scores of people have worked at the quarry over the years to provide materials to make our roads better and build our economy. For these forty years, the quarry has been a good taxpayer and a good neighbor in the City of Westbrook.

But now, under pressure from IDEXX and others, the City says that the permit the City issued forty years ago wasn't a permit after all.

- Even though no one, including the City, has ever challenged the 1968 permit until now.
- Even though the City admits that extensive quarrying has been going on continuously at the site for over forty years.
- Even though Pike has applied to the City and received permits to build and improve equipment and buildings at the quarry.
- Even though the City has repeatedly issued permits to allow Pike to blast rock at the quarry.
- Even though the City intentionally placed the quarry in an industrial zone where quarrying is appropriate.
- Even though the City admits that it has never issued one citation or violation to this operation for over 40 years.

But now, after all these years, the City has "stripped Pike Industries of its right to mine its quarry on Spring Street." (*Portland Press Herald, July 23, 2009*).

Does this sound fair to you?

This failure of common sense leaves Pike uncertain it can do business in Westbrook. It leaves the City facing years of litigation, which takes scarce money from schools and other public needs. And all of this benefits only IDEXX, a powerful corporation which doesn't like the "image" of a quarry. But the quarry can't be seen from their business, or anybody else's property because it is shielded from the road. And IDEXX admits the quarry has no physical effect on its business.

Does this make sense to you?

Is this the way the City of Westbrook, a community built by hard-working people, treats its businesses today? Can we afford to tell a good company that employs local people that you're no longer welcome in Westbrook after forty years in business? Because someone who lives in Falmouth doesn't like your "IMAGE?" And if the City can do this to Pike, who's next?

It's not right. **IT'S NOT FAIR!**

We need your help to keep common sense and jobs as Westbrook's priorities.

Please call your Westbrook City Councilor today and tell them the Zoning Board of Appeal's decision on Pike is unfair. Westbrook needs good businesses, all its businesses. We shouldn't be trying to shut down lawful businesses that we've issued permits to for forty years.

Please help. Pike has been a good taxpayer and a good neighbor. All Pike wants is to be able to continue to put local people to work, rebuilding our roads and our economy.

All Pike wants – all any citizen of Westbrook wants – is fairness from Westbrook City government.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

RON

Ron Usher
Chair

Citizens for Balanced Growth in Westbrook

For more information go to www.westbrookcitizens.com
Paid for by Citizens for Balanced Growth in Westbrook (207-221-1076)