

**St. Clair County Zoning Board of Appeals
Minutes for Meeting
At the Courthouse – 7:00 P.M.
May 4, 2015**

Members Present: Charles Frederick, Kent Heberer, Alexa Edwards, Rev. S. Gene Rhoden & Chairman George Meister

Members Absent: Patti Gregory & Charles Arriola

Staff Present: Anne Markezich, Zoning Director
Dave Schneidewind, Zoning Attorney

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman, George Meister.

Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

The roll was called and a quorum declared present.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION by Frederick to approve minutes of the April 6, 2015 meeting. Second by Gregory. Motion carried.

Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

New Business – Case #1

Subject Case #2014-20-SP – Casper Stolle Quarry & Contracting Company, 3003 Stolle Road, Dupu, Illinois, Owners & Applicants. This is a request for a Special Use Permit to allow a Planned Mineral Extraction Development in an “A” Agricultural Industry Zone District, on property known as XXXX Triple Lakes Road, Dupu, Illinois in Sugarloaf Township. (Parcel #06-23.0-100-002 & 003 & 06-23.0-200-001, 002 & 003)

Anne Cramer, President of Casper Stolle Quarry/Falling Springs Quarry

- Ms. Cramer explained she will present the proposal for a Special Use Permit for mineral extraction on farm ground owned by Casper Stolle for use at the Falling Springs plant.

Ms. Cramer presented a PowerPoint presentation as follows:

- Casper Stolle has been quarrying in this location since the 1860's.
- In 1987, Casper Stolle purchased the neighboring quarry which had been operation since the 1870's and they named it Falling Springs Quarry.
- In 1997, at Falling Springs Quarry they invested over 20 million dollars in a new state of the art, automated plant. This plant is one of its kind in the region and allows them to create custom blended aggregates to the customer's specifications which then allows them to produce their products such as asphalt with greater quality, precision and efficiency.
- The ground has an extremely large 100 ft. face of the highest A quality paving rock. This quality is required by IDOT for heavy construction products like highways and the Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge. This “A” quality aggregate extends into the proposed Special Use Permit area.
- Casper Stolle employs 44 full-time employees. A recent study by Northern Illinois University showed that the indirect employment impact from the aggregate industry has a job multiplier of 1.4, meaning that the company has a total employment impact of 106 jobs. In 2014, they contributed 1.7 million dollars to federal, state and local taxes.
- A Special Use Permit would allow the quarry to continue providing quality jobs, aggregates and revenues for St. Clair County.
- Ms. Cramer presented an aerial view of the quarry showing the placement of Casper Stolle, the Falling Springs Plant for general location. Ms. Cramer pointed out the 20 million dollar plant on the map.

- Mr. Dan Doerr, Plant Manager stated has been employed with the company for 20 years. Mr. Doerr stated the yellow line on the map is the overall footprint of the quarry property; the blue lines are adjacent properties, parcel by parcel. At Falling Springs Quarry they use blasting to remove the rock from the deposit and is the primary means of rock crushing. Blasting technology has evolved over the years and is highly technical, safe and efficient method for stone removal, while minimizing environmental impact. Mr. Doerr stated they continue to apply new technologies all the time as they become available to improve the blasting. IDNR has set limits on the affects of blasting and IDNR inspects the quarries records every 3 months. IDNR also requires the Quarry set up a seismograph to monitor large blasts at the closest residence to the blast site. At Falling Springs, they exceed the State requirements and monitor every blast with at least one seismograph and sometimes two. The average seismograph reading from the past year is less than 20% the maximum the State allows and they pride themselves in staying very low below the limit. Mr. Doerr explained fracturing of rock. Fracturing of rock only occurs within a section of 10 ft. from the hole. The rock is pushed off the face and they don't break behind the blast very far, less than 10 ft. So, the permanent affects don't go further back than 10 feet from a typical blast. They also strive for the most efficient blasting possible by maximizing the energy that breaks the rock and minimizing the wasted energy which is the ground vibrations that you can feel. The quarry gets seven bus loads of students per year to come see a blast in person; they take a quarry tour and take a class picture in front of the big loader and sort through some rocks and take some home.
- Ms. Cramer stated she anticipates no change to property values since the quarry has been located in this area since before 1900 and the quarry is consistent with adjacent properties in the immediate area.
- Ms. Cramer stated there will be 2.5-acres of trees that will have to be removed. The trees will be removed pursuant to IDNR recommendations.
- Ms. Cramer stated there will be no additional utilities required on the property and no facilities such as schools or hospitals are located nearby.
- Ms. Cramer presented a map of the 5-parcels included in the SP application. Ms. Cramer pointed out the mineral extraction area. Ms. Cramer pointed out the area with the 1,000 ft. setback line to stay away from houses and required by the County and will be used for stormwater control; and will also remain farm ground.

- Mr. John Bognar, Lead Geologist for the Quarry gave testimony in regards to the protection of the Falling Springs. Mr. Bognar was hired by Ms. Cramer to do geological investigation work. Mr. Bognar went into the quarries and found where the bedrock joints were and the sinkholes and the bedding planes are and studied the geology and expected flow patterns. Mr. Bogner stated he has 35 years of fluid flow analogy experience. Mr. Bognar presented a digital elevation image of the area which shows the sinkholes. Mr. Bognar stated they studied a report from 2000 from Tom Alley, Ozark Underground Laboratory that was commissioned by a neighboring quarry operation. Mr. Bognar pointed out on the map where the yellow triangles on the map represent where dye was injected into open sinkholes and the dye would show up at the Falling Springs. The purple triangles are injection sites that the dye did not show up at Falling Springs. The map shows where the dye ended up. This test gives us a sense for which way the water travels. The County's expert Dr. Esling suggested we inject dye in two other locations to help define the boundary for the Falling Springs recharge and both of those did not show up at Falling Springs.
- Ms. Cramer explained that the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency can inspect the property at any time; the Illinois Department of Natural Resource (Mines & Minerals) also regulates and inspects; the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives also does inspections and regulates; and the Mine Safety and Health Administration also inspects the facility.
- Ms. Cramer stated she has received approvals from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE), no permit required letter dated March 6, 2015; and one from Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Impact Assessment Section which includes an endangered species consultation dated March 6, 2015. Ms. Cramer also stated the Department has completed its review of the project and determined that the resource identified by EcoCat as in the vicinity are unlikely to be affected." In addition, the County did a Land Evaluation and Soil Assessment on May 4, 2015.

Mr. Schneidewind addressed the Zoning Board stating St. Clair County hired a consultant, Professor Steven Esling who provided a report (Exhibit B) which is part of their packets. Mr. Schneidewind presented the curriculum Vita of Steven Paul Esling (Exhibit B1). Mr. Schneidewind asked Professor Esling to summarize his report to the board.

- Mr. Esling stated he was asked several years ago to review studies on the geology regions adjoining the Casper Stolle Quarry for the Zoning Board, specifically to determine geologic or hydrologic issues before the Zoning Board ruled on further expansion of the Quarry.
- Mr. Esling stated there were two reports and both reports by separate agencies came to different conclusions about the drainage basin of Falling Springs, using the exact same data.
- Mr. Esling stated the last page of Exhibit B is a map; the blue line to the East is the line drawn for the Falling Springs Drainage basin by Moss & Alley and the red line is the line drawn by Leggette, Brashears and Graham.
- Mr. Esling stated he was concerned about the area in between the red and blue lines and he requested the Quarry conduct two dye traces in the area in between. The consultants monitored the dye at falling springs for an extended period of time and found nothing. The report was modified to suggest a significant portion of the area between the blue and red line are not part of the Falling Springs drainage basin.
- Mr. Esling stated he amended his report which is Addendum C that states it is reasonable in the area proposed for the permit to allow the quarrying.
- Mr. Esling stated it is reasonable to say where the quarry proposes the work will have minimal to no impact.

Discussion

- Mr. Frederick asked at what length is that dye traceable. (Mr. Esling stated the dye is detected at very low concentrations; so some of the dye may be going in another direction; but if any trace of dye went to the Falling Springs it would have been detected.)
- Mr. Frederick asked what the chances are the dye is filtered prior to getting to the Falling Springs. (Mr. Esling stated he does not see that as a problem; but admits Karst hydrology is the most complicated.)
- Ms. Edwards asked what year the studies were done. (Mr. Esling stated the Moss & Alley study was done in 2002 and the Leggette, Brashears, and Graham study was done in 2008.)
- Chairman Meister asked when the last dye tracing was done. (Mr. Esling stated the dye tracing was October, 2013 and the results were recorded in February, 2014.)

- Ms. Edwards confirmed that the mining will not start until 2028. (Ms. Cramer stated this is a 50-year plan; but when the plant costs \$20 million dollars and the trucks are about \$1.3 million and the loader is \$1.6 million, you need to have long-range plans to get your financing.)
- Ms. Edwards asked in this time-frame from 2002 until 2028 and you said this is a karst terrain; could there possibly be a change in the flow. (Mr. Esling stated he would not be surprised if sinkholes showed up but 50-years in a geological timescale is nothing and he does not see significant changes in flow in that 50-year period.)
- Ms. Edwards asked if something does go wrong, what is the check and balance. (Mr. Esling stated the best check for the County is the area that they are actually proposing to quarry is a very small portion of the Falling Spring drainage basin, so even if they were to capture some of the Falling Springs discharge it should still have minimal impact on the Spring.)
- Chairman Meister asked if mining into this new territory could possibly get a big flow of water into the quarry. (Mr. Esling stated he does not think that there will be a significant change.)
- Mr. Heberer stated how far back into the property do you go in one year. (Ms. Cramer stated that is a hard question to answer because that depends on the market and the economy. Ms. Cramer stated they have mined in one year sometimes 1-acre and sometimes 3-acres.) (Ms. Cramer stated the Department of Natural Resources comes to the quarry every year and do an affected acreage assessment tour and are at the quarry every 3-months for a tour.)
- Mr. Rhoden asked if the blasting creates any type of erosion. (Mr. Doerr stated they strip the dirt off the land before we get down to the rock, so our pit acts as a large filtration basin of anything that will come in. They do not discharge any water off site; it all is filtered out.
- Mr. Heberer asked what they do with the dirt once it is removed. (Mr. Doerr stated the dirt goes to construction projects and right now it is going for levy construction.)
- Mr. Heberer asked what the quarry does to reclaim the property. (Ms. Cramer stated there are a lot of options, but usually it is a great fishing hole.) (Ms. Cramer stated they work closely with the IDNR and follow their standards.)
- Chairman Meister asked if the equipment will be moved. (Ms. Cramer stated most quarries extend the conveyor belt to the plant.)

- Chairman Meister asked if they will move a mobile crushing unit on the property. (Ms. Cramer stated that is a possibility but she doesn't really see that because they have a major storage pile with a tunnel.) (Mr. Doerr stated if they had to get a unit it would go further away from the houses toward the center of the pit.) (Mr. Doerr stated he doesn't see the crusher ever moving into the Special Use Permit area; that is very far away.)
- Ms. Edwards asked what check and balance the County has if something goes wrong at the Quarry. (Ms. Cramer stated the Department of Natural Resources is on site 3-times per year for general inspections; and an additional time per year to evaluate the progress and how the ground was affected. They take aerial pictures and review and file a report with St. Clair County.)
- Mr. Frederick asked if the applicants will fence around the area. (Ms. Cramer stated there will be a safety assessment done on the property.) (Mr. Schneidewind stated if the application is granted pursuant to the Industrial zone regulations the applicant is required to put up a fence or berm at least 6 ft. in height.)
- Chairman Meister stated in the packet there is an unsigned agreement between St. Clair County and the Quarry for a conservation reserve of roughly 16-acres. (Mr. Schneidewind stated that is a conservation easement that the Quarry cannot disturb roughly 16.5-acres that runs the length of the bluff above Falling Springs.)
- Chairman Meister asked what is the total acreage of the application. (Ms. Cramer stated 135-acres total.)
- Chairman Meister asked if there is a LESA Rating. (Mr. Schneidewind stated the LESA rating on the property is 182-moderate.)

Public Testimony

- Zach Normansell – 8204 Triple Lakes Road, Dupon stated the view of the bluff is directly out his back window and wondered if that view will change. (Ms. Cramer stated that is where the 1,000 ft. buffer is located.)

Further Discussion

Michael Sullivan, Sugar Loaf Township Supervisor/Levy District Supervisor stated as the Levy District Supervisor he is in favor of granting the request to allow the quarry expansion.

County Board Member, June Chartrand read a statement as follows: Falling Springs Quarry has been quarrying since 1845 and currently employing 44 people with a good safety record. Since 2007 until now, the Zoning Director, the St. Clair County Attorney, Sugarloaf Township Supervisor, St. Clair County Board Chairman, St. Clair County Board Member – District #16, and officials from Casper Stolle Quarry have had several meetings discussing areas of working together for the preservation and protection of the Falling Springs. Each of the times, we have met with an area of concern, Casper Stolle Quarry has been very cooperative in resolving the issue that we have had with them. St. Clair County hired its own geologist to find an area of concern and report back their findings. Professor Esling has indicated he believes the quarry along with GeoExplorations the Quarry hired went beyond his expectations in conducting the dye tracing. Professor Esling concluded in his opinion as a geologist based upon the dye tracing results; the Stolle Quarry development into the proposed expansion area would not have an impact on the Falling Spring. Also, IDNR concluded its investigation into this project and stated that the resources in the vicinity are unlikely to be affected. Casper Stolle Quarry has agreed if the quarry expansion is approved by this board and finally by the County Board to place certain restrictions on part of its land that runs the length of the bluff above Falling Springs and there will be no defacement of that area. This allows Zoning officials the ability to enter the property for inspecting and determining if any violations are occurring. The Quarry has purchased several properties in the expected expansion area to help lessen the impact on the community. I spoke with the Sugarloaf Township Supervisor and he has no objections if the Township roads are unaffected. I received one phone call from someone who was asking information; rather than opposing the expansion. This has been a long and thoughtful experience trying to arrive at the right conclusion. First of all, along with most of you I want no harm to come to the Falls and no undue disturbance to come to any nearby resident. It is with great consideration therefore, after reading many reports; attending many meetings here at the courthouse and on site at the quarry itself that I am in favor of granting the request for expansion.

MOTION by Edwards to take this case under advisement for further review until June 8, 2015.

Second by Frederick.

Roll Call vote:	Rhoden -	Aye
	Heberer -	Aye
	Edwards -	Aye
	Frederick -	Aye
	Meister -	Aye

This case will be reviewed on June 8, 2015.

MOTION to adjourn by Frederick, second by Heberer. Motion carried.