

## Plan tramples Barkeyville

This is in response to the article "Asphalt plant air quality will be discussed" in the March 4 edition of the Butler Eagle. Unfortunately, the article had incomplete and incorrect information.

The article was about a state Department of Environmental Protection public hearing to be held at 7 p.m. today at the Barkeyville Borough Building. The purpose of the hearing is to discuss an air quality permit that the DEP is expected to approve for the proposed Barkeyville asphalt plant of Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc., of Bellefonte, Centre County.

Nowhere in the article is it mentioned that the public hearing was scheduled as the result of a petition signed by nearly 100 Barkeyville area citizens concerned about the air pollution expected to be discharged from the Hawbaker plant.

The article states that Hawbaker "bought 27 acres from the Oil Regional Alliance, an economic development group that owns the land in the 126-acre industrial park." It did not mention that the Oil Regional Alliance also granted the borough permit to construct the plant via an employee, and that the permit has now been appealed by a group of concerned citizens who insist that the permit was granted in direct violation of Barkeyville's zoning ordinance.

The ordinance specifically excludes any business that produces air pollution from locating in the borough.

The Hawbaker asphalt facility is expected to discharge from 212 to 1,447 tons of air pollutants annually,

much of which would be toxic, hazardous and dangerous.

The article further adds that "Hawbaker Inc. has stated the number of employees at the asphalt plant could grow to 150 people in a few years." Yet, Hawbaker's general information application submitted to the DEP states that there only would be seven people employed at the site.

The article adds that "the plant will burn oil, natural gas or propane to provide heat for drying the wet asphalt mixture." Yet, Hawbaker's January 2007 company newsletter states bluntly on the front page that the plant will be coal-fired.

The article also adds that "an estimated 200 to 800 trucks will enter and exit the plant each week." However, the plant is rated to produce 560,000 tons per year.

At 22 tons per truckload, this amounts to 318 diesel trucks per workday hauling asphalt out and raw materials in — or 1,590 trucks per week, with associated diesel emissions.

The Butler Eagle article added that "since the DEP will monitor the air quality around the plant and shut it down if it does not comply with standards," Leanne Stearns, borough council president, "said she isn't concerned about the company's plans." What isn't mentioned is that the DEP intends to allow the plant to operate for three to six months without emissions controls, to allow for monitoring the new pulverized-coal-burning technology prior to determining what emissions controls are needed.

Furthermore, the DEP knows that

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an asphalt plant cannot operate without toxic emissions, so it allows a restricted level of emissions.

In this case, Barkeyville residents will have to endure at least 212 tons per year of dangerous, hazardous air pollutants, potentially cancer-causing volatile organic compounds, sulfur emissions, carbon monoxide gas, nitrogen emissions (smog), and tons of soot — all permitted by the DEP.

Finally, the article states that "the borough didn't have to approve the company's application because the zoning already allows the plant." That is utter rubbish. Barkeyville's zoning ordinance states, "No structure shall be located, erected, constructed . . . nor . . . used or be designed to be used except in full compliance with all the provisions of this ordinance . . . it shall not emit any noxious, toxic or corrosive fumes or gases nor shall it emit any offensive odors . . . no pollution of air by fly ash, dust, vapors or other substances shall be permitted which is harmful to health, or to animals, vegetation or other property."

The proposed Hawbaker asphalt facility constitutes an assault by big business against a small community.

Barkeyville has provided for its own protection by establishing a zoning ordinance that specifically excludes polluting industries. The ordinance in question has been trampled upon by monied interests who intend to have their way with the little community of Barkeyville.

For the citizens' side of this troubling story, including links to the documents mentioned, Eagle readers are advised to visit the Web site [protect-barkeyville.org](http://protect-barkeyville.org).

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