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## **Anderson Twp Officials Approve Mine**

By Steve Kemme • skemme@enquirer.com • June 2, 2010

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ANDERSON TWP. - A controversial underground limestone mining operation received the green light Wednesday from township zoning officials.

Despite strong opposition to the proposed mine from many Anderson Township residents and neighboring communities, the township's Board of Zoning Appeals approved the mining operation by a 3-2 vote.

The approval comes with 25 conditions that Martin Marietta Materials Inc., the mine operator, must meet.

Most of the conditions are designed to prevent the mine from endangering the community's safety and from causing significant increases in dust, traffic congestion and noise. The company will be required to maintain a \$1 million bond to cover any damages to nearby buildings or other property caused by the mine operation.

There were about 150 people at Wednesday's hearing at the Anderson Center. Most of those attending opposed the mining operation.

Afterward, the dejected mine opponents said they will take their fight to the courts.

Tim Mara, attorney for CABOOM (Citizens Against Blasting on Our Miami), said he will appeal the zoning board's decision to Hamilton County Common Pleas Court.

"It's impossible to craft a set of conditions to make this mining operation safe," Mara said.

"This is just a bad decision for the community as a whole," said Cathy Burger, who lives near the proposed mine site and leads CABOOM.

Richard Brahm, attorney for Martin Marietta Materials, said his company will abide by all the conditions and will strive to make the operation meet top standards. Throughout the life of the limestone mine, Martin Marietta will be responsive to the community's concerns, he said.

The mine, planned for a 480-acre site at Broadwell and Round Bottom roads, would involve daily blasting 400 to 800 feet underground and would draw 250 trucks each day to the site.

The board's decision Wednesday marked the culmination of the longest zoning case in Anderson Township's history.

Martin Marietta first applied 22 months ago for a conditional-use permit for the mining operation and for a variance for storing explosives underground on the site.

Zoning board members approving the mining operation were Kevin Osterfeld, Jean Peter and Susan Conley. Board members Robert Johnson and Brian Elliff voted against it. Osterfeld, the board chairman, cast the deciding vote, but offered no explanation for his position.

Johnson and Elliff said the mine would be too disruptive in an urban environment. They said enforcing the 25 conditions attached to the approval of the mine operation would be expensive and difficult for the township to regulate.

"There are 25 conditions," Elliff said. "That in itself tells you this is not a good use for this area. Martin Marietta is a company that is going to be antagonistic. I don't believe this is the type of corporate partner Anderson wants to welcome."

But Peter and Conley said they were convinced that the 25 conditions would protect the community's interests and that Martin Marietta would be an asset to Anderson Township.

The company has agreed to donate land for the construction of a road connecting Ohio 32 and Broadwell Road that would take some of the truck traffic off Ohio 32.

Brahm said the three zoning board members who supported the mine rose above the emotional and political issues surrounding the case.

"I think the evidence supports the decision they made," he said.

As for residents fears that the mine would threaten safety, health, property, air and water, Braham said, "That's just not going to happen."