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**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Larry Lehman, Director  
Land Reclamation Program  
Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0176

Dear Mr. Lehman,

As you know, on May 19, 2022, a “public meeting” was held in Ste. Genevieve concerning the permit application submitted by NexGen Silica, LLC to conduct silica sand mining operations on a 249 acre site in Ste. Genevieve County.

This meeting was conducted in the gym at the local community center. People who attended the meeting sat along the long side of the gym floor and in the bleachers, as well as in the bleachers at each end of the gym. There were three video monitors placed on the gym floor. These monitors faced the people sitting along the long side of the gym floor. The presenters used a Bluetooth microphone connected to a floor speaker that was situated on the gym floor facing the people sitting along the long side of the gym floor.

During the meeting, the following events occurred:

- The Bluetooth microphone failed to connect to the single floor speaker on multiple occasions. The floor speaker was switched out several times, but the Bluetooth connection problems persisted throughout the evening, making it impossible for anyone in the audience to hear all that was being said. Also, even when the Bluetooth microphone was functioning properly, people sitting in the bleachers at either end of the gym floor had difficulty hearing all that was being said.
- The placement of the video monitors made it impossible for the people sitting at either end of the gym floor to see the content being displayed on the video monitors. Also, several presenters used Powerpoint presentations with small font sizes, which made it almost impossible for anyone in the audience to follow along with the presenter’s technical content.
- Several technical presentations often appeared to run over whatever time had been allotted for the overall presentation. Further, several of the technical presentations that attempted to use detailed content that was displayed in such small size, quickly went “over the heads” of almost all audience members. Because these technical presentations took up almost 90 minutes, audience members soon became quite apprehensive about whether they would have any time to ask questions and make comments.

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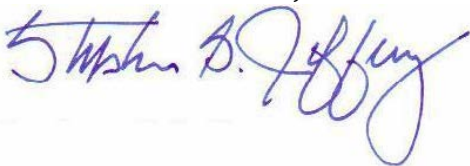
- The Department did not provide a moderator to facilitate the meeting and ensure it went smoothly. In this regard, the technical presentations were ended by the company after the audience apprehension became apparent. The floor was then opened up to the audience. Because there was no moderator acting to facilitate an orderly meeting, several audience members were allowed to ask multiple questions and make multiple comments, which took away from the time available for other audience members to speak. In fact, after the Department ended the meeting a little after 10:00 pm, several audience members commented they would have asked a question, but they could not. Further, at least two speakers used several minutes making comments directed to personal legal issues involving one of the company owners, which served to inflame emotions. Had a Department moderator been used, it is certainly possible that the entire meeting would have proceeded in a much smoother manner.

As a result of all of the foregoing issues and technical glitches, the May 19 public meeting could be described by some people as a "disaster." Therefore, it is requested that the Department strongly consider conducting a second public meeting. During this second public meeting, it is requested that the Department provide a moderator, that the Department and the company each make a brief opening presentation, and then open up the floor to the public for questions and comments. The moderator should hold each speaker to a time limit, and take action to control any inflammatory and personal comments. It is noted that this format has been used successfully by different programs in the Department to conduct similar public meetings over the past several years.

Please feel free to contact me in the event you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,

**JEFFERY LAW GROUP, LLC**



Stephen G. Jeffery

SGJ:sj