

From: [Rich LaBombard](#)
To: [Pam Alderink](#)
Subject: Fwd: Personal Comments regarding Proposed Sand Dune Mining and Marina
Date: Thursday, October 20, 2022 9:53:31 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lauren Hodson <hodsonlm@gmail.com>
Date: October 19, 2022 at 3:54:56 PM EDT
To: Rich LaBombard <rlabombard@douglasmi.gov>
Subject: **Personal Comments regarding Proposed Sand Dune Mining and Marina**

Dear City Manager, Rich LaBombard,

I am a resident of Laketown Township. The land we own connects directly to the Saugatuck Dunes State Park. We moved here one year ago, drawn by the natural wild beauty of the area, after many years of traveling from Grand Rapids to enjoy long hikes as often as we could.

There is no other place in Southwest Michigan that feels as special to me than the Saugatuck/Douglas area. And, I believe this is the case because of all the undisturbed wild spaces that have been preserved and protected here.

In my humble opinion, it would be a great loss, and a dangerous and heartbreaking move for the future of the area, to allow the proposed sand dune mining and marina to be built in the heart of the most beautiful preserved natural areas in Southwest Michigan. Such a choice would have a devastating and lasting impact.

With the addition of the Northshore development, the feeling in the Saugatuck Dunes State Park has changed. While one adjusts over time, it will never be the same level of privacy, beauty and vastness that was previously enjoyed. I feel a strong concern that the development of this marina would further impact the enjoyment of the surrounding natural areas on both sides of the rivermouth that are beloved by so many.

I urge you to consider the importance of these wild spaces, and to act in

the Public Interest and in accordance with the Tri-Community Master Plan. Please do everything you can to protect and preserve the heart of our natural areas at the Kalamazoo River Mouth.

To be specific, I ask that you please initiate and pass a resolution stating: *The proposed excavation and removal of 250,000 tons of sand within Michigan's Critical Dune Boundary at the Kalamazoo River Mouth is Contrary to the Public Interest as detailed in the Tri-Community Master Plan.* Then, submit the approved resolution to EGLE and USACE in their permit reviews.

Thank you for your consideration. I also ask that you please read and consider the detailed letter below put forth by the Saugatuck Dunes Coastal Alliance, which I agree with wholeheartedly.

With best regards, your neighbor,
Lauren Hodson

6542 Windemere Way
Holland, MI 49423
Laketown Township

I am writing to strongly urge you, as a fellow resident and as my elected official, to protect the Wild Heart of Saugatuck by passing a resolution stating the proposed excavation and removal of 250,000 tons of sand within Michigan's Critical Dune Boundary at the Kalamazoo River Mouth is Contrary to the Public Interest as detailed in the Tri-Community Master Plan.

The proposed excavation and removal of 250,000 tons of sand from Michigan's Critical Dune Boundary to add 3,200-feet of waterfrontage to develop a private marina would forever change the Essential Character of the Wild Heart of Saugatuck. It would set a dangerous precedent for other marina developments in the River Mouth Area, potentially including Pine Trail Camp, Ox-Bow School of Art, even Saugatuck's northeast parking lot at Oval Beach.

The proposed excavation is projected to:

- Erase 6.5 acres of rare Critical Dunes for commercial gain.
- Drain the surrounding groundwater that feeds the globally imperiled interdunal wetlands on the Patty Birkholz Natural Area.
- Damage the Potawatomi Traditional Cultural Property, risking lake sturgeon, burial sites, wild rice, and other Cultural Values.

- Destroy the archaeological and historic **site** of Singapore.

The proposed marina threatens our local economy and clearly violates local ordinances. It:

- Diminishes and devalues the Tri-Communities' \$20+-million investment in the adjacent Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area, Tallmadge Woods, and the Patty Birkholz Natural Area by introducing inappropriate noise, vibration, fumes, and visual intrusions.
- Undermines the economic vision in our Tri-Community Master Plan – degrading our Parks, Natural Areas, Beaches, Waterways, Shorelines, Wetlands, and Dunes by changing the essential character of the Kalamazoo River Mouth.
- Adds significant boat traffic to the already-congested River Mouth area.
- Violates Saugatuck Township Code of Ordinances Section 40-910(h) and Section 40-337(c)3 prohibiting excavation to add 3200' of additional **waterfrontage** within Michigan's Critical Dune Boundary.

We need your voice – and your actions – to protect and preserve the Wild Heart of Saugatuck.

This fall EGLE will again notice the City of Saugatuck and Saugatuck Township to provide comment in the state permit review. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) noticed the City of Saugatuck and Saugatuck Township in 2017 and again in 2018.

PLEASE initiate and pass a resolution now stating: *The proposed excavation and removal of 250,000 tons of sand within Michigan's Critical Dune Boundary at the Kalamazoo River Mouth is Contrary to the Public Interest as detailed in the Tri-Community Master Plan.* Then, submit the approved resolution to EGLE and USACE in their permit reviews.