

CASE SUMMARY

APPLICATION TYPE: USE ON REVIEW



File Number: 7-B-26-UR **Related File Number:**
Application Filed: 5/26/2026 **Date of Revision:**
Applicant: THOMAS M. HALE

PROPERTY INFORMATION

General Location: East side of Graybeal Rd, south of Buttermilk Rd
Other Parcel Info.:
Tax ID Number: 129 080 (PARTIAL), 08001 **Jurisdiction:** County
Size of Tract: 60 acres
Accessibility: Access is via Graybeal Road, an unstriped local street with 14-19 ft of pavement width within a 50-ft right-of-way.

GENERAL LAND USE INFORMATION

Existing Land Use: Agriculture/Forestry/Vacant Land
Surrounding Land Use:
Proposed Use: Mining and mineral extraction (quarry) expansion **Density:**
Planning Sector: Northwest County **Plan Designation:** RL (Rural Living), HP (Hillside Ridgeline Protection)
Growth Policy Plan: Rural Area
Neighborhood Context: The surrounding area is predominantly rural in character, with large lots off of thoroughfares and limited suburban-style development off of side streets. There is a commercial node to the southwest at the Everett interchange off of I-40/I-75.

ADDRESS/RIGHT-OF-WAY INFORMATION (where applicable)

Street: 1624 GRAYBEAL RD
Location:
Proposed Street Name:
Department-Utility Report:
Reason:

ZONING INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Zoning: A (Agricultural)
Former Zoning:
Requested Zoning:
Previous Requests:
Extension of Zone:
History of Zoning: None noted.

PLAN INFORMATION (where applicable)

Current Plan Category:

Requested Plan Category:

SUBDIVISION INFORMATION (where applicable)

Subdivision Name:
No. of Lots Proposed: No. of Lots Approved: 0
Variances Requested:
S/D Name Change:

OTHER INFORMATION (where applicable)

Other Bus./Ord. Amend.:

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Planner In Charge: Mike Reynolds

Staff Recomm. (Abbr.): Approve the request to expand existing quarry (mining and mineral extraction) operations, as shown in the plan of operations, subject to 10 conditions.

Staff Recomm. (Full): 1. Meeting all requirements of Article 4, Section 4.50.02 (Standards for use-on-review approval of mining and mineral extraction) in the Knox County Zoning Ordinance, as detailed in the staff report comments.
2. Meeting all other applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Ordinance, including, but not limited to, Article 4.10, Supplementary Regulations Applying to a Specific, to Several, or to All Zones, which has stipulations related to noise and light, among others.
3. If outdoor lighting is to be added, all light sources shall be shielded and arranged so that lighting is directed away from any boundary adjacent to residential uses.
4. No clearing or grading of the subject site (expansion area) before the Concept Plan for the realignment of Graybeal Road is approved by the Planning Commission.
5. Preservation of trees as much as is practicable, and planting new trees where trees were either removed or are sparse, sufficient to meet the landscape screening standards specified in the Plan of Operations.
6. If County Commission approves the closure of Graybeal Road through the site as required to allow the quarry expansion as proposed, the relocation of Graybeal Road around the expansion area must be approved by the Planning Commission as a Concept Plan per Section 2.07.B. of the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations. In no case shall the minimum width of the buffers, setbacks, berms, and landscape screening be reduced to accommodate the Graybeal Road alignment. However, the drilling and blasting setback shall only be required to be enlarged if necessary to maintain the 200-ft width of the large berm located between the drilling and blasting area and the relocated Graybeal Road right-of-way.
7. Submitting a preliminary berm and landscape screening plan with the Concept Plan application for the area between the realigned Graybeal Road and the adjacent properties. The Planning Commission may require adjustments to the proposed berms and landscape screening during the Concept Plan phase, if deemed necessary based on the detailed road design, to mitigate light trespass from headlights.
8. Providing an updated Plan of Operations to Planning staff before submitting the Concept Plan application for the relocation of Graybeal Road. This shall include removing all red line edits and updating plan sheets in Exhibit R2.0, R3.0, R4.0, and R8.0 to be consistent with this approval.
9. Meeting all applicable requirements of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works.
10. If during design plan approval or construction of the development, it is discovered that unforeseen off-site improvements within the right-of-way are necessary as caused by the development, the developer will either enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the County for these improvements or reimburse the County for their direct expenses (if completed by County crews) to make corrections deemed necessary.

Comments: ***** REVISIONS SINCE JULY 9, 2026, PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING *****
See the applicant's cover letter dated 8/6/2026 and Attachment 2: Summary of Modifications and Additional Conditions at the end of the Plan of Operations document.

This request is to expand the quarry operations of Vulcan Materials Company. The Vulcan Materials Company facility has been in operation since 1974. Expansion requests were approved in 1996 (11-H-96-UR) and 2009 (4-B-09-UR). The facility as it operates today covers several parcels along Buttermilk Road, extending from Everett Road on its west to Graybeal Road on its east. This request adds the remainder of parcel 121 080, which is on both sides of Graybeal Road, and all of parcel 121 08001 to the operation. In order to avoid crossing Graybeal Road with its operations, the applicant proposes two

options for relocating Graybeal Road around the expanded operations and connecting to Buttermilk Road to the north (Plan of Operations, Exhibit R8.0): Option A, maintain the same alignment and connection point to Buttermilk Road, and Option B, connect to Hickory Meadows Way in the northeast corner of the expansion area. While the road closure and relocation are not part of this use on review application, it is necessary to release the land occupied by the current street surface and allow the quarry expansion to be on contiguous land. Access to the site would not change as a result of this proposal; the applicant has stated they will retain their current access point off of Everett Road.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Plan of Operations details the hours of operation and the types of activities that will be conducted. Construction of the berm would be limited to between 7 am and 6 pm; all blasting of the quarrying operation would be conducted from 9 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday only; all other quarry operations within the A zoned portion of the property (i.e., the property associated with this use on review) would be conducted from 7 am to 9 pm Monday through Saturday. See the General Mining Operations section in Exhibit R5.0, Proposed Plan of Operations, for the limited exclusions to this schedule.

BUFFERS AND SCREENING

Drilling and Blasting Setbacks

The quarry will maintain the following drilling and blasting setbacks from the back of lots fronting on Buttermilk Road (450 ft), Hickory Meadows Drive (500 ft), and Pittman Drive (450 ft).

Buffers and Landscape Screening

A 100-ft "undisturbed" buffer will be provided between the right-of-way of the realigned Graybeal Road and the adjacent properties, where "most" of the existing trees are to remain. Some trees will have to be removed to construct the "small berm", described below. A 30-ft, Type A landscape screen will be provided at the property line consisting of existing and new trees. See Planning Exhibit B for Type A landscape screening guidelines.

Evergreen trees will be planted along the crest of the large berm on the Buttermilk Road and Hickory Meadows Drive sides of the extension. The planting will consist of two staggered rows of evergreen trees. Trees will be spaced 20 ft apart within each row, providing an effective spacing of 1 tree every 10 ft when measured across the staggered rows.

The existing wetlands and vegetation serve as the buffer on the Pittman Drive side of the extension. This does not preclude the necessary clearing and grading to construct the realigned Graybeal Road.

Berms

Small berm -- A landscaped berm (approximately 10 ft tall) located within the 100-ft undisturbed buffer, between the right-of-way of the realigned Graybeal Road and the neighboring properties of Hickory Meadows Drive. The berm width and type of landscaping are not defined.

Large berm -- A 200-ft wide berm (approximately 25-30 ft tall) located along the Buttermilk Road and Hickory Meadows Drive sides of the expanded drilling and blasting area. The external slopes of the berm will be vegetated similarly to the existing berm along Buttermilk Road, and will have trees planted at the crest as described above under Buffers and Landscape Screening.

OTHER PROPOSED OPERATIONAL STANDARDS

See the Proposed Plan of Operations for additional information regarding the operational standards listed below and others.

1. Expanding the active vibration monitoring network from 7 to 12 locations. The additional monitors are dedicated to the area around the expansion. All monitors will continue to be maintained, and data collected by an independent third-party technical consultant.
2. Quarterly blasting data will be made available for review by appointment in the Quarry Office.
3. An opt-in pre-blast notification call list for neighbors consisting of two notifications for each planned blast: 1) an advance notice indicating that blasting is anticipated during the following week; and 2) a same-day notification provided within approximately one hour prior to the planned blast.
4. Blasting operations will be scheduled (day of week and time) based on site development requirements, proximity to nearby structures, and seasonal market demand, and are generally anticipated to occur up to two times per month; provided, however, that blasting shall not exceed ten occurrences in any calendar month.
5. Low-sound backup alarms on all mobile equipment operating in the expansion area, including during berm construction.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR USES PERMITTED ON REVIEW (ARTICLE 4.10, SECTION 2)

The planning commission, in the exercise of its administrative judgment, shall be guided by adopted plans and policies, including the general plan and the following general standards:

THE USE IS CONSISTENT WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES, INCLUDING THE

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF KNOX COUNTY.

A. There are 7.7 acres of HP (Hillside Protection) area in the 60-acre extension, with 7.18 acres in the HP with slopes of 25 percent or less. Based on the nature of mining operations and the construction of the berms and relocated Graybeal Road, the majority of the HP area will be disturbed. If this request is approved, the disturbance in the HP area will be further detailed during the Concept Plan review for the relocation of Graybeal Road.

B. The property is designated as the RL (Rural Living) place type. The RL place type is described as being primarily comprised of single-family residential uses within a rural setting, and may include agriculture, open space, and some limited commercial that supports agriculture and civic uses. The primary land uses listed for this place type are open space and single family residential. The place type lists small-scale commercial, civic, and agricultural uses as secondary.

C. The proposed development may be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Policy 2, to ensure that development is sensitive to existing community character. The expansion of quarry activity at this location will produce dust, noise, and vibrations on neighboring properties. The operational standards in the Proposed Plan of Operations and conditions of approval are intended to help mitigate any adverse impacts.

D. The realignment of Graybeal Road around the expansion area is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Implementation Policy 9, to coordinate infrastructure improvements with development.

E. Maintaining Graybeal Road as a north-south connection is consistent with the recommendations of the Hardin Valley Mobility Study.

2) THE USE IS IN HARMONY WITH THE GENERAL PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE.

A. The A (Agricultural) zone provides for a wide range of agricultural and related uses as well as residential uses with low population densities and other compatible uses which generally require large areas or open spaces. This use requires large open areas and meets that criteria, but is not necessarily compatible with the uses described, including residential uses with low population densities.

B. "Mining and mineral extraction" is listed as a use permitted on review in the A zone, and is subject to all requirements set forth in Article 4.10, "Supplementary regulations applying to a specific, to several, or to all zones," and Article 4.50, "Standards for mining and mineral extraction."

C. Article 4.50 acknowledges that "mineral extraction may involve differing processes and may seriously affect mined parcels and surrounding properties" and provides the criteria for reviewing this use to try to mitigate those impacts. Article 4.50.02 is specific to surface mining and mineral extraction and is the relevant section for this review. This section stipulates that a conditional use permit must be approved by the Planning Commission and County Commission.

D. The standards for review contained in 4.50.02 are as follows, and the Proposed Plan of Operations meets these criteria.

1. Excavations shall be confined to areas at least one hundred (100) feet from any property line within or adjacent to any residential, agricultural or commercial zone, and shall be at least two hundred (200) feet from the property line of any dwelling or platted subdivisions. Further, no overburden, spoil bank or stockpile may be deposited within one hundred (100) feet of any such property lines, except with the written consent of the owners of the adjoining property, to reduce the elevation and conform with the existing contour or average grade of the adjoining property or in order to provide adequate drainage. The quarry operations are shown extending to a point 450 ft from the property lines to the residential properties to the north and south, and 500 ft from the platted residential subdivision to the east.

2. In any nonindustrial zone, the excavations shall be confined to areas at least one hundred (100) feet from the right-of-way line of any existing or platted street, road or highway; except that excavations may be conducted within such limits in order to reduce the elevation thereof to conform to the existing or established elevation of the adjoining or platted street, road, or highway, or in order to provide for adequate drainage. The site plan shows the quarry operations extending to a point 200 ft from the realigned Graybeal Road right-of-way.

at least two hundred (200) feet from the right-of-way lines of any existing or platted street, road, or highway. No such buildings or equipment are proposed with this application, but should they be added in the future, they would be required to meet these criteria.

4. All roadways on, vehicular entrances to, and exits from the private, subject properties to any public roads shall be located to secure safety, lessen congestion and facilitate transportation and shall be maintained to eliminate any nuisance from dust to neighboring properties. Access to and from the site will remain as is. No new access points will be created onto the quarry site.

5. A Plan of Operations shall be submitted for approval by the Planning Commission and County Commission, and shall provide in all respects:

a. Adequate safeguarding and protection of neighboring interests and the general public health and safety. The hours of operation, proposed preservation of and addition of new trees to provide a landscape screen at the shared property line with residences, and the fence and berm providing sound attenuation and a visual barrier, will help mitigate some of the impacts of the quarry, though the noise and vibrations may still be a factor for nearby residents.

b. A satisfactory plan for the routing of trucks, materials and equipment from the points of excavation to the permittee's processing operations. Access is not proposed to change, so the traffic pattern to and from the site is not anticipated to be greatly impacted, other than the rerouting of Graybeal Road around the expansion area.

c. A plan and program for the restoration of the land to minimize potential detrimental effects on the area by reducing, insofar as is reasonably possible, peaks and depressions, and controlling erosion. The landscape plan proposes to capture and filter stormwater runoff in bioswales that will flow generally from north to east towards the low area at the southeast corner of the property where it feeds into Hickory Creek.

6. Whenever the permit issued by the Director of Code Administration and Enforcement has expired, or whenever the operation of excavation has been discontinued for any period exceeding twelve consecutive months, then, all plants, buildings, structures (except fences) and equipment shall be entirely removed from the property and the property shall be restored in accordance with the approved plan and program for restoring land, except approved otherwise by the Planning Commission upon request at that time. The "Reclamation" section of the Proposed Plan of Operations, Exhibit R5.0, details what would occur upon the completion of mining activities.

7. If the property to be used for such excavation is within one hundred (100) feet of any residential zone or platted subdivision, it shall be enclosed along the exterior boundaries as excavation progresses by a fence or landscape screen as prescribed by the Planning Commission. Berms of 10 ft and 25-30 ft in height, landscape screening, and fencing are proposed.

8. No excavation shall take place, or plant operated on any property in any nonindustrial zone, except between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., except whenever any reasonable or necessary repairs to equipment are required to be made. The provisions of subsection 1. above shall also apply to this subsection. The "General Mining Operations" section of the Plan of Operations, Exhibit R5.0, details the hours of operation and the types of activities that will be conducted, and is also summarized in the staff comments above. Subsection 1. states, "All equipment, building and premises used for such purpose shall be constructed, maintained and operated in accordance with the performance standards of the county as set forth in section 4.10, 'Supplementary regulations applying to a specific, to several, or to all zones,' of these regulations."

3) THE USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE IT IS PROPOSED, AND WITH THE SIZE AND LOCATIONS OF BUILDINGS IN THE VICINITY.

A. Mining and extraction, while not generally compatible with surrounding residential development, already operates in this area.

B. The proposed buffers, berms, and landscape screening help maintain the character of the area around the external boundary of the expansion area.

4) THE USE WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY INJURE THE VALUE OF ADJACENT PROPERTY BY NOISE, LIGHTS, FUMES, ODORS, VIBRATION, TRAFFIC CONGESTION OR OTHER IMPACTS WHICH MAY DETRACT FROM THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT.

A. Mining and extraction can produce effects that have adverse impacts on neighboring properties, such as smoke, noise, and vibrations. The applicant is proposing to install five additional active vibration monitors around the expansion area.

B. With the realignment of Graybeal Road, the proposal will have little impact on traffic since no new access points will be created; the site access point will remain the same.

5) THE USE IS NOT OF A NATURE OR SO LOCATED AS TO DRAW SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC THROUGH RESIDENTIAL STREETS.

A. Access to the site is off of Everett Road, a minor arterial. No additional traffic will be added through residential neighborhoods.

6) THE NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IS NOT SUCH AS TO POSE A POTENTIAL HAZARD TO THE PROPOSED USE OR TO CREATE AN UNDESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PROPOSED USE.

A. There are no other known uses in the area that could be a potential hazard or create an undesirable environment for the proposed use.

Action: Approved with Conditions **Meeting Date:** 8/13/2026

Details of Action: Approve the request to expand existing quarry (mining and mineral extraction) operations, as shown in the plan of operations, subject to 10 conditions, with the additional condition to limit blastings to no more than 6 per month.

Summary of Action: Approve the request to expand existing quarry (mining and mineral extraction) operations, as shown in the plan of operations, subject to 10 conditions, with the additional condition to limit blastings to no more than 6 per month.

Date of Approval: 8/13/2026 **Date of Denial:** **Postponements:** 7/9/2026

Date of Withdrawal: **Withdrawn prior to publication?:** ☐ **Action Appealed?:**

LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND DISPOSITION

Legislative Body: Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission

Date of Legislative Action: 8/24/2026

Ordinance Number:

Disposition of Case: Approved with Conditions

If "Other":

Amendments:

Approve subject to 21 conditions: 1. Meeting all requirements of Article 4, Section 4.50.02 (Standards for use-on-review approval of mining and mineral extraction) in the Knox County Zoning Ordinance, as detailed in the staff report comments.

2. Meeting all other applicable requirements of the Knox County Zoning Ordinance, including, but not limited to, Article 4.10, Supplementary Regulations Applying to a Specific, to Several, or to All Zones, which has stipulations related to noise and light, among others.

3. If outdoor lighting is to be added, all light sources shall be shielded and arranged so that lighting is directed away from any boundary adjacent to residential uses.

4. No clearing or grading of the subject site (expansion area) before the Concept Plan for the realignment of Graybeal Road is approved by the Planning Commission.

5. Preservation of trees as much as is practicable, and planting new trees where trees were either removed or are sparse, sufficient to meet the landscape screening standards specified in the Plan of Operations.

6. If County Commission approves the closure of Graybeal Road through the site as required to allow the quarry expansion as proposed, the relocation of Graybeal Road around the expansion area must be approved by the Planning Commission as a Concept Plan per Section 2.07.B. of the Knoxville-Knox County Subdivision Regulations. In no case shall the minimum width of the buffers, setbacks, berms, and landscape screening be reduced to accommodate the Graybeal Road alignment. However, the drilling and blasting setback shall only be required to be enlarged if necessary to maintain the 200-ft width of the large berm located between the drilling and blasting area and the relocated Graybeal Road right-of-way.

7. Submitting a preliminary berm and landscape screening plan with the Concept Plan application for the area between the realigned Graybeal Road and the adjacent properties. The Planning Commission may require adjustments to the proposed berms and landscape screening during the Concept Plan phase, if deemed necessary based on the detailed road design, to mitigate light trespass from headlights.

8. Providing an updated Plan of Operations to Planning staff before submitting the Concept Plan application for the relocation of Graybeal Road. This shall include removing all red line edits and updating plan sheets in Exhibit R2.0, R3.0, R4.0, and R8.0 to be consistent with this approval.

9. Meeting all applicable requirements of the Knox County Department of Engineering and Public Works.

10. If during design plan approval or construction of the development, it is discovered that unforeseen off-site improvements within the right-of-way are necessary as caused by the development, the developer will either enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the County for these improvements or reimburse the County for their direct expenses (if completed by County crews) to make corrections deemed necessary. 11. Vulcan will construct a landscaped berm (small berm) (approximately 10 feet high) within the 100-foot undisturbed buffer adjacent to the right-of-way of the new Graybeal Road. 12. Vulcan will maintain the following drilling and lasting setbacks from the back of lots

Date of Legislative Action, Second Reading:

Other Ordinance Number References:

Disposition of Case, Second Reading:

If "Other":

Amendments:

fronting on Buttermilk Road (450 feet), Hickory Meadows Drive (500 feet), and Pittman Drive (450 feet). 13. In addition to its existing network of seven (7) active vibration monitors, Vulcan will maintain five (5) additional montiors dedicated to the Extension Area. These monitors will be scientifically placed to provide enhanced monitoring coverage and additional blasting data for neighbors along Buttermilk Road, Hickory Meadows Drive, and Pittman Drive. All monitors will continue to be maintained, and data collected by an independent third-party technical consultant. 14. Vulcan will make quarterly blasting data available for review by appointment in the Quarry Office. 15. Vulcan will maintain and promote an opt-in pre-blast notification call list for neighbors. Participants will receive two (2) notifications for each planned blast.: 1) an advance notice indicating that blasting is anticipated during the following week; and 2) a same-day notification provided within approximately one (1) hour prior to the planned blast. 16. Blasting operations will be scheduled (day of week and time) based on site development requirements, proximity to nearby structures, and seasonal market demand, and are generally anticipated to occur up to two (2) times per month; provided, however that blasting shall not exceed six (6) occurances in any calendar month. Blasting wil occur between 9 am to 4 pm Monday through Firday except when U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) regulations dictate otherwise. No blasting will occur on Federal holidays. 17. Vulcan will require the use of low-sound backup alarms on all mobile equipment operating on the Quarry Extension, including during berm construction. 18. Most of the existing trees withing the 100-foot buffer will remain and Vulcan will augment the existing vegetation with a 30-foot Type A landscape area. 19. Vulcan raise the height of the large vegetated screening berm from 20-25 feet high to 25-30 feet high along the Buttermilk Road and Hickory Meadows Drive sides of the Extension. 20. Vulcan will plant evergreen trees along the crest of the large vegetated screening berm on the Buttermilk Road and Hickory Meadows Drive sdes of the Extension. The planting will consist of two (2) staggered rows of evergreen trees. Trees will be spaced twenty (2) feet apart within each row, provided an effective spacing of one (1) tree every ten (10) feet when measured across staggered rows. 21. Vulcan will be required to realign Graybeal Road from Pittman Drive to Buttermilk. As part of this realignment, Vulcan shall pay for all costs associated with the work, including design, right-of-way dedication, construction, and construction inspection. The relocated portion shall also be widened to meet current standards and include intersection improvements at both Pittman Drive and Buttermilk Road, as approved by Knox County Engineering and Public Works.

Date of Legislative Appeal:

Effective Date of Ordinance: