

Greetings:

I am a resident in Washington County. However, my elderly mom lives in Frederick County, adjacent to the old East Alco property. You are already aware of how Quantum has made a mess of the situation, especially when you consider how much neighbors wanted to give them the benefit of the doubt. Many are now feeling betrayed. My mom has asked me to deal with this issue on her behalf. Besides the current pollution issue, there is also the noise issue which may become a nightmare for neighbors long after the current pollution issues have (hopefully) been resolved. That is where you could potentially make a real difference. Please let me explain.

First, I will try to explain how you may really help. Second, I will give more details if you are interested.

First: how you could really help.

Quantum is building an infrastructure for up to 13 “server farms”, along with a fiber optic loop between Frederick and Virginia. Considering just the Frederick facility, one would think there would be few issues effecting neighbors. However, even putting aside issues related to both running fiber optic cables, and also responsible management while building the facilities, there are longer term issues of great concern. Due to the high power usage, and resulting heat generation, there is a significant noise issue with such facilities cause as they try to keep all these computers cool. There are families in Virginia who have had to literally move out of the first floor of there homes to move into their basements so they can sleep at night. Do we want that here?

Given how Quantum has mishandled the current environmental issues, I no longer trust them to respect future noise issues. While Frederick County is trying to write regs to deal with this, over the years I have learned that regulations mean nothing unless there is credible enforcement. As best as I can determine, currently if there is a loud noise episode at 3AM, neighbors have no recourse but to call the police and hope their loudness monitoring team can document the problem in time. In this day and age, why can't neighbors rely on automated monitoring that is taken seriously in court if it should come to that? Give us the legislative teeth so that victims of repeated offenders of loudness laws are able to efficiently and effectively bring offenders into compliance! If Quantum plans on consistently complying with regs, then they should have no objections. I submit that companies often rely on regs having no teeth. Please help us make the teeth!

Second, more details if you are interested:

Precedent.

In my youth, I spent time helping folks in Baltimore dealing with antiquated factories who chose to pour poisons into neighborhoods rather than modernize. I lived in Frederick at that time, but chose to spend time helping them as I could. One of the efforts was to train citizens to witness visible air emissions in a professional manor that would stand up in court as professional witnesses. I got my training certification, along with several others. Once there was frequent and repeated violations that went unpunished. Almost overnight industry magically either found ways to fix their messes or shut down because they were never going to stop polluting anyway. AMAZING. Obviously, the details would be different in this situation. However, the results are probably the same – Trust but verify. Given no recourse for breaking the rules, uncaring interests treat neighbors poorly. Politicians are to be held responsible for not giving citizens the tools needed to push back!

About me.

I am president of the currently hibernating 501c3 group, CPPV/UPSHOTMD located in Pleasant Valley, Washington County, MD.

<https://upshotmd.org>

I am maintaining a notebook on the Quantum issue. I encourage others to use if they wish. I (hopefully) add value in simple ways. For example, I take videos of public meeting and trim to the relevant portions so I/you do not have to wade through hours of irrelevant content.

<https://upshotmd.org/DCDR/>

By profession, I have a technical background. While I am not a sound engineer, I do have my name on many technical publications. If I have to spend a few thousand dollars on audio monitoring equipment, then so be it.

Thank You

Eric Whitenton

(and Tina Whitenton)