

# Neighbors of Glavel Complain of Noise and Smell

by Irene Wrenner

Essex's newest manufacturer, Glavel, Inc., produces light-weight aggregate, and now generates complaints from residents living nearby.

Neighbors' concerns are mounting as Glavel begins round-the-clock production.

Nearly a dozen members of the public spoke up at the start of the March 21st Selectboard Meeting to register objections.

Saxon Hill Road residents have been complaining of strong odors and nighttime noise since manufacturing began last week.

Other members of the public noted the fragility of the forest nearby and the factory's lack of "harmony with natural surroundings."

Peaceful co-existence is an aim of the Town's zoning for that area, known as Resource Preservation District-Industrial (RPD-I).

But neighbors on the opposite side of the Saxon Hill Industrial Park have seen clearcutting of buffer zones and reported recurrent pre-dawn construction noise in recent years.

Gina Barrett, Sand Hill Road resident, was among the public

members who, recalling that trauma, voiced concern at this new development.

Michael Peterson, who lives closest to the facility, also wondered about possible well water contamination.

"I just want to be a good neighbor. That's all I want people to be to me ... respect me," [said Peterson](#). "They say high fences make good neighbors. There's not

a fence high enough right now for this situation."

Michael Peterson shares his story in this video by Ken Signorello: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vG5tcuFFMHA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vG5tcuFFMHA)



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## State House Approves New Districts for Fall Elections

by Irene Wrenner

After months of sketching boundaries, tallying constituents, and listening to feedback

from towns, the House Committee on Government Operations (HCGO) recently approved its final map of Legislative House districts.

As of March 25th, bill H.722 includes this map of new House districts — plus descriptions of new Senate districts, created by the Senate Committee on Reapportionment. They will go into effect once the Governor signs this bill.

Recent population growth, as noted in the 2020 US Census,

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For Peterson this is a quality of living issue. He wondered aloud how much his property's assessed value has decreased in the past two weeks.

Regarding an anticipated conversation with the head of Glavel, Peterson said, "I want it to be civil ... I just want it to be fair ... I want to be able to go outside and play with my [8-year-old son] and not smell plastic and not worry about, God forbid, developing something because he's out playing in his yard. I don't think that's unreasonable."

Town Manager Greg Duggan, a former Town Planner, said he spoke to Glavel's CEO that morning. The firm is operating 24/7 with the state's approval and an Act 250 permit.

[He indicated](#) that Glavel is environmentally conscious and expects they would take the public's feedback seriously. It would be "brand-destroying if they were found out to be polluting the environment." They are open to having conversations with neighbors and making it work for everybody.

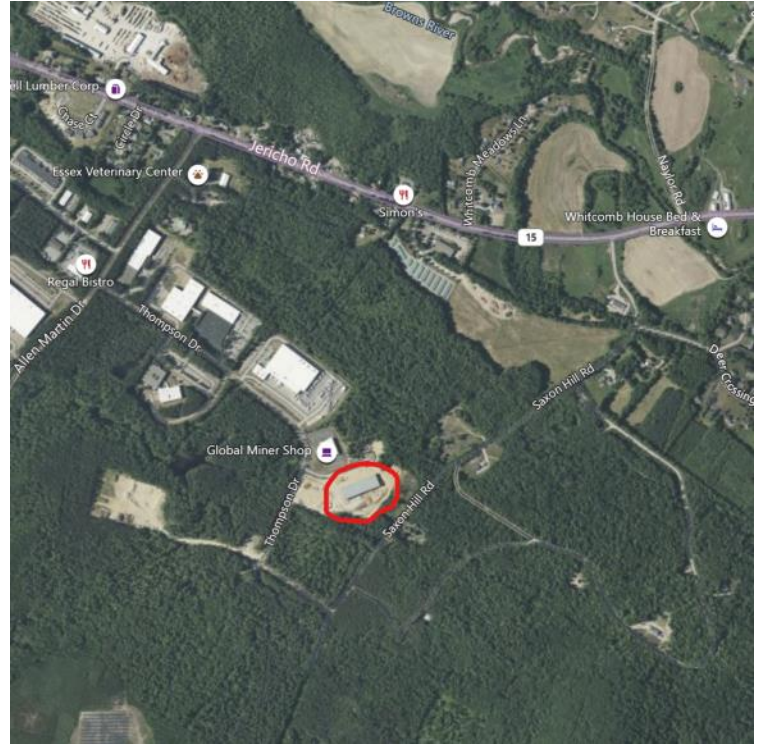
When approached by the *Retorter* on the day after the Selectboard Meeting, Glavel CEO Rob Conboy confirmed, "I've reached out to them to have a conversation about our operations. I'm following up with Mike [Peterson] and Greg [Duggan] again this morning to coordinate a meeting."

Unlike the Village, the Town has no noise ordinance. Selectboard member Tracey Delphia reminded her peers that a public nuisance ordinance for the Town is being reviewed by the Essex Police Department. Perhaps that would apply in this case, once enacted, she said.

Glavel's factory uses recycled glass as its main ingredient in making lightweight foam glass gravel used in construction for drainage and insulation purposes.

But it also uses foaming agents, according to [its website](#), which turn the glass into a pumice-like output after being heated to extremely high temperatures. Residents suspect this

burning is creating noxious fumes carried by breezes.



© 2020: Bing Maps, Vexcel Imaging, TomTom

The Saxon Hill Industrial Park is situated among pine forests, dotted with bodies of water, and features some higher elevations with scenic overlooks.

Town water and sewer service allow for a variety of commercial uses along Sand Hill Road, Allen Martin Drive, Corporate Drive, Thompson Drive, and now Red Pine Circle.

## School Board and Trustee Seats Contested this Year

The April 12th election has contested races for Village Trustee as well as the Village seat and Town seats (2) on the Essex Westford School District Board. The *Essex Retorter* youtube channel features [one-minute interviews](#) with the eight candidates who accepted our invitation to discuss what they'll bring to their respective board if elected. *Retorter* staff have not endorsed any candidates this election.





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and constitutional requirements for representation led the HCGO to remove some Village residents from the current House District 8-2 and place

them into a district with a majority of outside-the-Village residents.

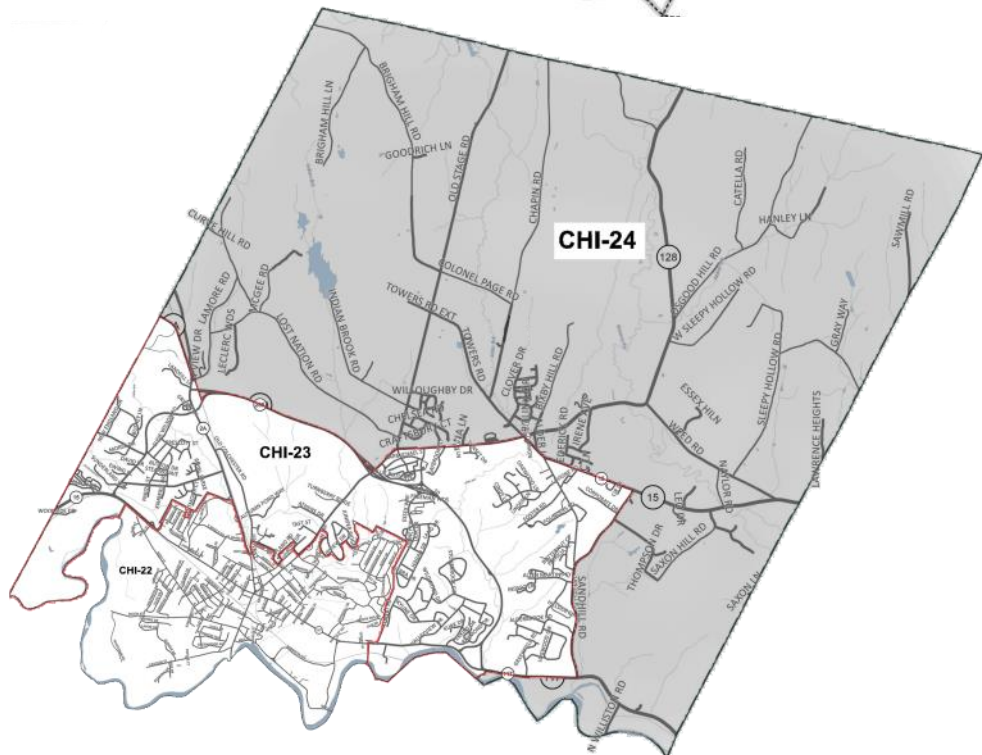
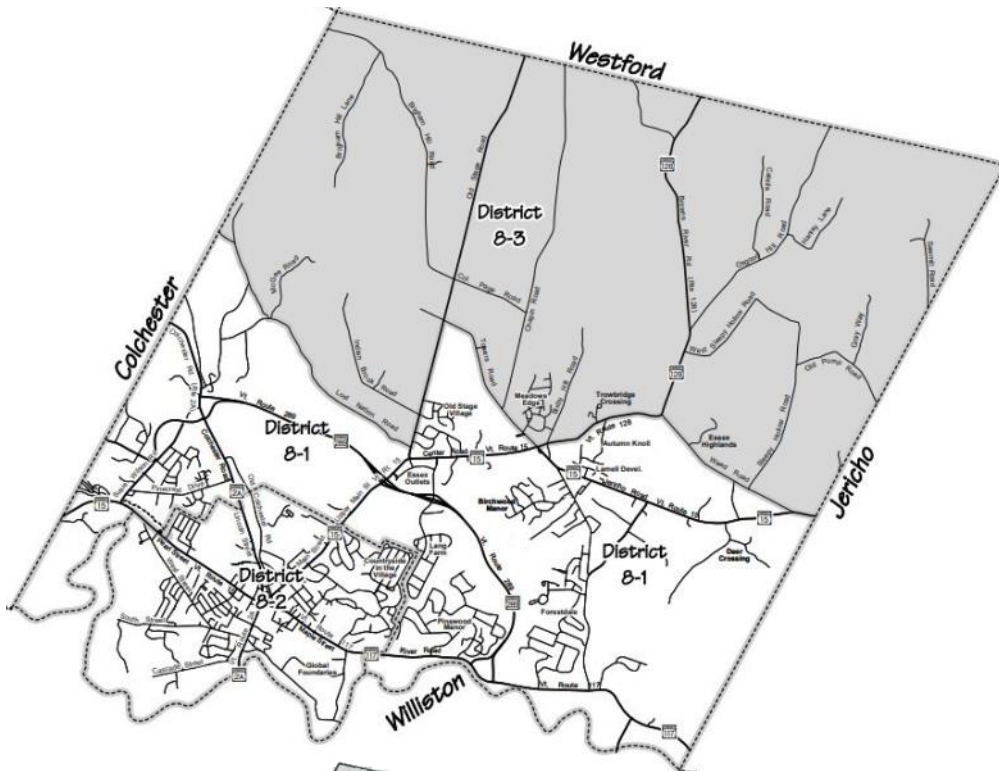
Likewise, all Westford residents, who are part of House District 8-3, would no longer

share a district or representative with Essex residents.

The following statements, though overly simplified, sum up what basically transpired in this recent reapportionment:

The new Chittenden 22 was 8-2.  
The new Chittenden 23 was 8-1.  
The new Chittenden 24 was 8-3.

*Out with the old districts (top) and in with the new (bottom):*



## Signs of Spring



# Antiques Appraiser Visits Senior Center

*by a Voice from the Village*

My jaw dropped when the appraiser said my husband's heirloom was worth \$5,000.

Ethan Merrill, of Merrill's Auctioneers and Appraisers in Williston, conducted a mini Antiques Roadshow® at the Senior Center on March 18th.

I was one of 20 hopefuls who brought objects for appraisal that afternoon.

According to Merrill, the miniature watercolor of my husband's ancestor would be a great item for auction.

But the miniature has been passed down reverently through multiple generations, so it's my duty to keep it in the family.

The miniature wasn't the only surprise of the afternoon.

Another woman's raincoat was purchased in London in the 1960s. While Merrill examined it with a loupe, the audience agreed it was a perfect example of the mod style popularized by Twiggy just before the hippie era.

With a twinkle in his eyes, Merrill predicted fights over



*Thanks to Ken Signorello for taking Retorter photos and videos. He livestreamed this event on Facebook.*

the coat at auction and said it should bring in \$300 to \$400.

As a third generation antique dealer, Ethan Merrill knows his business.

A music box, a tiffany lamp, a Vermont made desk, jewelry, glassware, historical documents – no matter what he was appraising, he demonstrated an incredible breadth of knowledge.

The afternoon was so successful, Merrill has generously agreed to return to the Senior Center in the fall.

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12 Main Street  
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[news@essexretorter.com](mailto:news@essexretorter.com)

[www.EssexRetorter.com](http://www.EssexRetorter.com)

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