

note: formatting was altered in translating this file.

Important Information Regarding the Proposed Didion Ethanol Plant

Meetings to be Held by the Village

Village of Cambria Public Informational Meeting with panel of Guest Speakers Monday, December 16th, 7pm Cambria-Friesland Elementary School Gym
Village of Cambria Zoning Board of Appeals – to consider Didion’s request for a height variance, Thursday, December 19th, 6pm at the Cambria Community Room (next to Village Offices)
Village of Cambria Planning Commission – to consider Didion’s proposed ethanol plant, Thursday, December 19th, 7pm at the Cambria Community Room (next to Village Offices)

PLEASE ATTEND THESE MEETINGS. ASK QUESTIONS. BE PART OF THE PROCESS.

Didion Milling's corporate mission statement reads, "To demonstrate professionalism, environmental responsibility, and social conscientiousness in all relationships and aspects of our business." At Didion’s November 26th Informational Meeting they stated that the new “facility would meet or exceed all regulatory standards” and “meet or exceed all written standards by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)”.

DIDION HAS NOT MET REGULATORY AND DNR STANDARDS IN ITS CURRENT OPERATIONS

Didion has been served with a number of Notices of Violation by the DNR.

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June 1993 (Operating as United Maize, Inc), Didion received a notice of violation from the DNR for discharging pollutants into Duck Creek and filling the stream bed at its Cambria facility.

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March 2000, Didion is ordered to pay a fine of \$107,500 to the State for failure to obtain permits, exceeding particulate emissions and failure to use pollution control equipment at its Prairie du Chien facility.

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May 2001, Didion received a notice of violation for grading and removing vegetation from the banks of the Duck Creek at its Cambria Facility

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February 2002, Didion received a notice of violation for an oil spill at its Cambria facility that was not properly reported estimated by the DNR to be 100-150 gallons.

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July 2002, Didion received notice of violation for exceeding their permitted grain storage capacity, exceeding the 5500 ton per month average emissions over the four year period from 1998-2002 at its Cambria facility. This notice placed Didion on the EPA’s High Priority Violation list for particulate matter emissions. Also in this notice Didion was asked to explain why they constructed 11 silos at their Cambria facility when their permit exemption was for 7.

Current Cambria Village ordinances for industrial sites state that “no building or structure shall exceed a height of forty-five (45) feet or 2½ stories in this district”. (Sec. 10-1-48 (d)(4)).

Didion already has at least 11 silos on their site that are well above 45 feet in height. They did not seek or receive height variances for these structures from the village. Why not? Why have the village ordinances not been enforced? On Thursday, December 19th at 6pm the Village of Cambria Zoning Board of Appeals will meet to discuss Didion’s height variance request for construction associated with their planned ethanol facility.

Truck Traffic

Many residents of Cambria, especially those on 146 and Mary St. already complain of the noise, vibrations, risk, and diesel emissions coming from the truck traffic in Cambria. According to information presented by Didion at their November 26th meeting the planned ethanol plant would add an additional 112 trucks per day (56 trucks going in the plant is also 56 trucks going out). This would be in addition to the trucks already going to Didion and the trucks servicing the two canning

factories.

Studies show that truck traffic reduces property values.

Vibrations caused by truck traffic has also been shown to damage houses.

Diesel emissions from trucks contain irritants and cancer causing substances.

Air Quality

Ethanol production emits cancer causing agents and hazardous pollutants. Ethanol production also emits odors. The “stink zone” around an ethanol plant is estimated to be 5-10 miles. Thermal oxidizers, the best available technology for ethanol plants, do not remove all hazards from the air. The new thermal oxidizer at the Minnesota Gopher State ethanol plant at best was only 85% efficient at removing the complex pollutants emitted by the plant. There are currently no state and federal guidelines available for all of the compounds released in ethanol production, including glycerol, lactic acid and acetic acid, which were found in the highest concentrations at the Gopher State plant.

The Village should see to it that base-line measurements of current air quality are taken before the ethanol plant can move forward. Didion should pay for these measurements. Didion and the Village need to address how they plan to deal with potential air quality and odor issues. Didion should put in writing how much odor and dust they plan to emit. The Village should set up a specific process for dealing with air quality and dust and odor complaints. Some communities in the state have set up an “odor log” to track complaints.

Water

In information distributed by Didion the company states that their ethanol plant will use “approximately 130 gallons p/minute...while approximately 20 gallons p/minute will be used for cooling and will be discharged from the plant.” That adds up to 187,200 gallons/day going into the plant and 28,800 gallons/day being discharged from the plant. The United Wisconsin Grain Producers (UWGP) distributed numbers for their planned ethanol facility in Randolph township that 442,787 gallons/day would be used by the plant and 405,048 gallons/day would go out of the plant in [cooling] tower evaporation and discharge.

This brings up important questions:

1. Can the current ground water supply around Cambria support Didion’s plant?
2. Can the current ground water supply in the larger area support both Didion and the UWGP?
3. How come Didion’s water volume figures are so low compared to that given by UWGP?

Didion has not been clear about if they plan to use the Village’s water and the Village’s sewer system. In fact Didion has made very little specific information available to the public about this plant. The public and the Village needs to know the facts before it can make decisions that will have great impacts on the community and its quality of life.

Reported Benefits

Farmers have been promised a 5-10 cent per bushel increase in the price paid for corn. Will Didion contract this price in advance? Has this been guaranteed? There is nothing to stop ethanol plants from buying damaged corn or even afla/toxin contaminated corn to use in their processing. This can be shipped in from outside the area, transported, and still be much cheaper than the local supply of corn. Ethanol plants can run on other vegetative materials as well as garbage. Only minor modifications are needed to convert these plants to other input materials.

Didion spoke of the increase in taxes going to the Village, school and county. Didion now pays the Village of Cambria about \$25,000. Didion’s literature states an estimated \$30,000-40,000 increase in all property taxes paid. This is only a \$9,000-\$12,000 increase to Village. And don’t forget that Didion just got its assessed taxable value reduced. The Village of Cambria now owes Didion \$12,000 because of this change in assessed value.

Didion talks about the benefit of good paying jobs for the local community. Few current employees live in Cambria. At the November 26th meeting Didion refused to quantify the number of their workers living in Cambria or the real dollars that their expansion would bring to the Village. At that meeting John Didion, Dow Didion, and Dale Drachenberg all said we can make that information available. In follow up discussions with the company they have refused to give information except that 22 workers list Cambria as an address.

**CAMBRIA NEEDS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.
IS ETHANOL PRODUCTION IN THE VILLAGE OF CAMBRIA
THE DEVELOPMENT THAT WE WANT?**

Prepared by Cambrians for Thoughtful Development, December 15, 2002
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