

Town of Hillsborough
Waste Transfer Station Advisory Committee
September 29, 2008
Town Barn
7 PM

MINUTES

Committee Members Present:

Mayor Pro Tem Michael Gering, Chairman
Commissioner Evelyn Lloyd
Paul Kimple, Becketts Ridge HOA
Jim Ciao, Stratford Company/Waterstone
Tatiana Zybin , Cornwallis Hills HOA
Bryant Colson, Orange County Economic Development Commission
Nathan Robinson, Davis Road Area Resident

Town Board Members Present:

Mayor Tom Stevens
Commissioner Brian Lowen
Commissioner Eric Hallman

Town Staff Present:

Margaret Hauth, Planning Director
Robert Hornik, Town Attorney
Nicole Ard, Assistant Town Manager

County Staff Present:

Gwen Harvey, Deputy County Manager

Chairman Michael Gering called the meeting to order at 7:04pm. Chairman Gering provided a brief history of the Waste Transfer Station Advisory Committee's formation, and a timeline of upcoming Town and County meetings of interest. He noted that the Town Board's goal was to receive a recommendation from stakeholders via the Committee. That recommendation and additional public comment would be considered at the October 13th Town Board Meeting.

Following Committee, Town Board, and Town and County staff introductions Ms. Margaret Hauth, Planning Director, provided an overview of the solid waste transfer station siting process, including past history. This included an overview of the technical committee scores and the effort leading to 200 potential sites being reduced to 10 potential sites for further consideration. In response to a question from Chairman

Gering, Ms. Hauth confirmed that the established social and justice criteria would be applied to all 10 sites identified. Also noted was the October 21 County Board meeting, a public hearing, and anticipated additional public input opportunities before a final County Board decision anticipated in November.

Following Ms. Hauth's presentation, Mr. Nathan Robinson, Davis Road Area resident and environmental engineer, provided an overview of the County proposal for a solid waste transfer station. His presentation, based on the County consultant's materials, included a description of a waste transfer station and potential factors of such a facility including the size of trucks traveling to such facilities, waste holding capacity, wash down procedures, waste blowing and odor, waste generation, recycling, and utilities. He noted Orange County reports stating that odor would be controlled and limited to inside the facility and that trucks would be covered to help address litter. He also noted that waste generated would go to a private company for disposal elsewhere.

In follow-up to Committee questions, Mr. Robinson confirmed that he was not familiar with the size of the proposed facility but estimated 20-foot bays and at least 140,000 sq. foot building. He noted that 70-foot trucks were the limit via the North Carolina Department of Transportation, however he was not familiar with truck traffic at the current landfill. Mr. Robinson noted that the facility should be built to accommodate capacity for special circumstances, including holiday volume. He also shared that 120 tons of waste could be transferred based on the reported statistic of 12 trucks per day/20 tons per truck. He also noted that while he had not been to Durham's transfer station, his understanding was that Orange County had visited the facility and considered hauling their not feasible. He confirmed that an estimated 10,000-15,000 gallons would be required for "wash down" as well as deposit into sanitary sewer or a holding tank. He shared that while he was not familiar with laws for cleaning such facilities, good practice would be daily cleaning to help control vermin; he estimated that 500 gallons could be used for "wash down". He and Ms. Gwen Harvey, Deputy County Manager, confirmed that air quality permits and other environmental requirements would be necessary for the facility. He also shared that given his professional background, while not included in the County's proposal, a future recycling facility should be recommended for co-location with the new transfer station.

An item for follow-up with Orange County was confirmation of the size and number of trucks anticipated for the new waste transfer facility. Also requested was the truck traffic volume for the existing landfill. A cost-benefit analysis of the project, as well as comparison of the costs associated with the new facility and shipping the County's waste to another community was also recommended. Mr. Robinson noted a 2006 study that estimated \$5.5 million not including infrastructure improvements and additional employees needed to operate such a facility. In response to a request from the audience, he recalled material submitted by other governments estimating the additional costs to the Towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro to travel north of the current landfill at between 130,000 to \$200,000.

Mr. Ciao requested an additional follow-up item for Orange County clarification, the number of days the solid waste transfer facility would operate each week. He also shared concerns about high land acquisition costs and asked how much land would be purchased for the project-the entire property or a smaller portion. Likewise, he posed what would happen to the remainder of the property not used for the transfer station. Mr. Ciao also suggested the use of an industrial district as a more suitable site to meet community needs, citing experience in communities like Raleigh.

In response to Committee questions regarding parcel size and availability criteria and the calculation of individual scores for each criteria, Ms. Harvey and Mr. Louis Watts, Olver Consulting, outlined the County Board's process including the use of a committee of professional engineers. The Committee requested clarification of the criteria regarding land availability and usability, particularly why the sites were assigned different points. Additional clarification on how 10 of about 200 sites met the established criteria.

Mr. Ciao shared the impact of the inclusion of the two sites closest to the Waterstone development, particularly his large, institutional prospective customer's concern about the proposed transfer site. He confirmed for Chairman Gering that his company had not discussed legal action against the County for the proposal. He shared his company's work with the County to establish a location for Stratford's investment within the economic development district. Similarly, Commissioner Hallman discussed the Town and County's Joint Strategic Growth Planning efforts and past discussion about providing Town oversight of activities in the proposed project area.

In follow-up to the previous question on parcel size, Mr. Robinson asked for the number of acres required for both sites, including if the entire or portion of the parcels would be purchased. He used the example of Site #857- if 39 of 88 acres are needed, would the entire 88 acre parcel be acquired? In response, Mr. Watts introduced himself and confirmed that the pictures in the Olver presentation (and shared by Mr. Robinson during the meeting) were photos of a transfer station in Norfolk, a somewhat larger facility than planned in Orange County. He also confirmed that the newest transfer station in the area was completed in June 2008 in east Wake County. He explained that each site is a parcel unto itself and some parcels would be larger than necessary to accommodate factors such as access and expansion for future solid waste facilities such as recycling or drop off centers.

Mr. Bryant Colson of the Orange County Economic Development Commission stated that the Commission had not met since the transfer station issue developed and the economic development districts were long standing. He noted that the transfer station would not be at the forefront of any such district in the County. In follow-up Chairman Gering's question, he confirmed that the Commission was not consulted for technical criteria item #11, regarding zoning designations and requirements; he shared that he didn't know that economic development districts were included under consideration, as the Commission received a presentation for information purposes only.

Ms. Tatiana Zybin, of Cornwallis Hills HOA, shared her community's concerns regarding a variety of issues including impervious surfaces and run off, flooding on site #573, the impact of Tropical Storm Hanna in her neighborhood and the potential for the proposal to further impact the community's topography and flooding, wind impact, and the presence of waterways such as Cates Creek and Neuse River. Ms. Zybin also discussed traffic impacts – for example on Old NC 86 and the land's value. She shared that the proposed sites would impact the entrance to Town, as well as community health given California statistics on the impact of diesel pollution, particularly for children. She shared that there were 5 schools, as well as nurseries in the area. She also noted potential impact on property taxes by building in that location. She also stated Cornwallis residents' concern about increased highway noise pollution from trees cut down to facilitate the project. Chairman Gering confirmed that Cornwallis Hills residents desire that the EDD be used to provide them amenities and jobs. Ms. Zybin added that this is important because Cornwallis Hills is remote from central Hillsborough.

Mr. Paul Kimple of Becketts Ridge shared his community's concerns regarding traffic, particularly from I-40, and necessary infrastructure improvements to Old NC 86. Commissioner Hallman added that Old NC 86 is a scenic byway. Mr. Kimple also shared his concern regarding potential pollution and his belief that the area proposed for the transfer station is prime for growth to fuel support for other parts of the County. He also shared insight as a former Town Water and Sewer Advisory Board member, and gained consensus that the Town's water capacity would be limited to 1,800 "rooftops" after Waterstone is built out. He noted his concern about the anticipated 500 gallons per day required for "washdown" at the proposed facility. He shared his community's concern regarding the maintenance of quality sewer service levels if the transfer station project came online.

Ms. Zybin noted concern about the aesthetics of the community if this project moves forward. She asked that in addition to financial consideration, consider why areas must all be built up. Ms. Hauth noted that the County established 3 economic development districts in 1994. She confirmed that the districts allow government facilities, including solid waste collection centers, which are not specifically defined, could be recycling convenience center sites). She explained that because the use was allowed and no modifications would be made, a public hearing would not be required; she compared that to the Buckhorn Village project and that developer's effort to make modifications to the guidelines; she also confirmed that the same guidelines would be required for the Buckhorn Village project. She noted that during the meeting she received maps from citizens and would ensure the consultant and County received the maps. She confirmed for Commissioner Lloyd the contiguous sites.

Mr. Colson noted his dual service on the County Human Relations Commission and the importance of keeping social justice issues on the table. Mr. Robinson also discussed the need to consider social justice issues on a countywide basis. He shared concern regarding impacting a new community to address impacts on another. He also noted perceived bias against selecting the Rogers/Eubanks Road location, home of the existing landfill. He also questioned the criteria and noted that the criteria should not say central

collection location but central to population. He encouraged an environmental analysis that considered recycling of existing County owned land and infrastructure. He also asked that environmental criteria be critical components and questioned how environmental impacts have been evaluated and how this would occur in the future. Similarly, a Mr. Bill Wolfert, an area resident spoke up from the audience, requesting that an economic business case be made for moving the current facilities and establishing the new transfer station location and infrastructure- this included the previously discussed resources such as land, roads, water and sewer.

Mr. Bob Hornik, Town Attorney, shared that he and the Planning Director researched the issue earlier in the day and were surprised to find that the Economic Development District noted that government office and institutional uses permitted a solid waste collection facility; he explained that a more common sense interpretation would say these kinds of facilities would not be included in government office and institutional uses. He noted that future annexation could impact the Town's ability to influence Town control over land use planning in the proposed area. He also discussed highest and best use, land costs, and state permitting.

Mayor Stevens stated the need to boost long-term sustainability; he also noted potential economic concerns. In response to a question from Ms. Zybin regarding activities following the closure of the current landfill, Committee members confirmed that future landfill services could be in Chatham County or elsewhere outside Orange County, such as Virginia.

Following discussion, Ms. Harvey briefly presented the draft community specific criteria input form. She explained the form's use in the final analysis by the consultants to make a recommendation, with results possibly narrowed down further. Audience and Committee members discussed the form, including perceived lack of value, bias, the need to construct a new survey instrument and/or provide constructive feedback to the County Board regarding the criteria, forms and pitfalls in interpreting survey results. Also discussed was the potential to identify other existing county owned land that may have been excluded. Mr. Colson stated that the County should not allow an Economic Development District to be a "quick fix". The need for a cost-benefit analysis was also reiterated, with Town staff confirming that County minutes reflect an analysis of transporting waste to Durham was not feasible given size of that facility, distance, and cost.

There was consensus that while the County had been working on the station siting since 2006, area residents received late notice of the potential Hillsborough area sites considered. The Committee agreed that additional information was needed to evaluate the proposal and its impact after the September 17, 2008 County Board meeting where many learned of the proposed Hillsborough sites. Another meeting of the Committee was also recommended to prepare a recommendation to the Town Board by October 13. Ms. Harvey confirmed that County staff seeks to provide the County Board with information for its October 21st meeting by October 14th. However, a representative could make a

verbal and written presentation on behalf of the group during the County Board's public input session.

Mr. Ciao summarized the main themes for continued Committee deliberation including the proposal's impact on Economic Development, Environmental, and Traffic. Chairman Gering opened the remaining meeting time to public comment. Ms. Sarah Burt Timmel, Cornwallis Hills, noted that a farm is an adjacent property owner and that she was given notice a half-hour before the County Board's meeting. Mr. Carl Wallace discussed the impact of the transfer station's proposed location at the I-40 interchange on economic development and the County's tax base. He also shared concern that the County's analysis was incomplete and contains mistakes such as the inclusion of a site that had a conservation easement. Ms. Jessie Kaufman shared that as a property owner, land lord denied the ability to previously build in the Economic Development District, she desired more information on the County decision making process, including weight of comments and forms. Mr. Ralph Warren offered traffic count data for staff and advised that the County's public input sessions only allow three minutes for speakers and the Town Board and Committee may require more time. Mr. Gary Lee, a Davis Road resident, noted he lives a ¼ mile from a proposed site and has concerns regarding the technical criteria evaluation summary for sites #10 and #56-specifically carbon footprint as #56 is further from #10, yet scored higher. He asked that the Town request a delay and noted that the proposal does not meet the Hillsborough 2010 Vision and would negatively impact the town.

Chairman Gering thanked everyone for their participation. Commissioner Lowen moved for adjournment. Commissioner Hallman seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Ard
Assistant Town Manager