

BEFORE THE ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD

STOP THE MEGA-DUMP,)	
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)	
Petitioner,)	PCB 10-103
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v.)	
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COUNTY BOARD OF DEKALB COUNTY,)	
ILLINOIS AND WASTE MANAGEMENT)	
OF ILLINOIS, INC.,)	
)	
Respondent.)	

PUBLIC COMMENT

DeKalb Daily Chronicle
"County Landfill Could Be Expanded"
Published February 18, 2009

Filed by Waste Management of Illinois, Inc.

De Kalb Chronicle – Published February 18, 2009

County landfill could be expanded

Author(s): ELENA GRIMM - egrimm@daily-chronicle.com

Date: February 18, 2009 Section: News

A proposal to expand the DeKalb County Landfill is picking up steam as county board members are planning to meet next week to go over a detailed agreement between the county and Waste Management of Illinois Inc. Tuesday's workshop is intended to give county board members a chance to raise any questions they have about a proposed Host Community Agreement, which calls for expanding the current facility run by Waste Management to a capacity of 22 million tons, DeKalb County Administrator Ray Bockman said.

The landfill was built in 1958 and has 812,000 tons of space available as it stands today, according to Waste Management officials. The overall capacity of the existing facility in tons was not immediately available Wednesday.

The facility, located on Somonauk Road, south of Interstate 88 in Cortland Township, is in the county's third legislative district.

The proposal provides that more than 500,000 tons of solid waste a year, or about 2,000 tons per day, would be brought to the Cortland facility, Bockman said. Currently, the landfill receives 300-350 tons of trash a day. The extra 1,700 tons would come from outside DeKalb County, possibly from Kane and DuPage counties, he said.

County board members and District 3 representatives Riley Oncken and Ken Andersen said in separate phone interviews that they agree with the expansion – if it means more revenue for the county and strikes a balance with neighboring property owners.

“My preliminary ideas in looking at [the draft agreement] is that it looks like it's going to be an overall beneficial thing for the county and will bring in substantial revenue,” said Oncken, R-Sycamore. But he also expressed environmental concerns that he hopes will be answered.

Andersen, R-Sycamore, said that one of the highlights of the agreement is a Property Value Guarantee Plan, in which Waste Management says it would cover property owners within a half mile of the expansion from property devaluation.

“Any time we can come to some type of agreement that gets revenues from other sources besides property taxes, I think that's a great thing,” Andersen said.

Other benefits and safeguards provided for by Waste Management in the agreement include replacing contaminated wells; donating to the DeKalb County Economic Development Corp. to attract new commercial and industrial businesses; and appropriating money for recycling and educational programs offered by the county.

“While we recognize the need to provide for disposal capacity, recycling is an integral part of that,” said Bill Plunkett, a spokesman for Waste Management. “Any plan we pursue would offer financial benefits for the county to support recycling programs.”

The existing landfill has about seven years of disposal space remaining, Plunkett said.

“The key is, we're providing for future disposal needs of DeKalb County,” he said.

Cortland Town President Bob Seyller was more hesitant about those future needs being brought to Cortland.

"I know it's very difficult to site new landfills, and it's easier to expand on what they already have," he said. "I know that waste is not going away. ... If it's going to be somebody, I'm glad to see it's Waste Management."

He added that he supported the project as long it is carried out to the highest safety and environmental standards and with minimal impact to the community.

Bockman said the DeKalb County Board could consider the host agreement March 18. If that is approved, Waste Management would have to apply for permits from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to get permission to expand the landfill.

If you go

What: County Board workshop

When: 7 p.m. Tuesday

Where: Legislative Center Gathertorium, 200 N. Main St. in Sycamore

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PUBLIC COMMENT

DeKalb Daily Chronicle
"Board Discusses Landfill Expansion"
Published February 25, 2009

Filed by Waste Management of Illinois, Inc.

De Kalb Chronicle – Published February 25, 2009

Board discusses landfill expansion

Author(s): ELENA GRIMM egrimm@daily-chronicle.com

Date: February 25, 2009 Section: News

SYCAMORE – DeKalb County Board members met Tuesday night to ask questions about a preliminary agreement that lays out the major elements included in a possible expansion of the DeKalb County Landfill. The Host Community Agreement – drafted by county leaders and representatives of Waste Management of Illinois Inc. – lays out roles, responsibilities and benefits for each entity and is the first step of a multiyear process to getting an expansion underway.

Waste Management wants to expand the DeKalb County Landfill to take in a total of 500,000 tons of solid waste a year, or about 2,000 tons per day. Currently, the landfill receives 300-350 tons of trash a day from the county, and just seven years of capacity remain, officials say.

County board members asked how the expansion project would guarantee protection of surrounding property owners, the county and the environment.

Under the agreement, Waste Management would pay the county host fees, or royalties, at \$4.60 per ton of waste. Unlike tipping fees, which can be imposed by a local government for waste management purposes, a host fee can be spent on other things.

Riley Oncken, R-Sycamore, wondered how the host fee compares to host fees Waste Management pays to other governments.

Lee Addleman, a consultant for Waste Management, said that the payment to the county was “generous.”

“Four dollars and sixty cents for a 2,000-ton-a-day facility probably is the highest for that size facility in the state,” Addleman said. “We tried to front-load as much money as we could into this agreement and also front-load the guarantee.”

Other economic benefits under the agreement include one-time payments to the DeKalb County Economic Development Corp. and the Forest Preserve District, as well as free disposal for all county government buildings and insurance provisions totaling \$30 million.

Another concern made by county board members was how to protect neighboring property owners. Paul Stoddard, D-DeKalb, wanted to ensure sufficient remedies were in place should the landfill produce groundwater contamination.

Besides monitoring wells and providing any homeowners that experience contamination with new wells, Addleman said that the agreement adds a property value guarantee, so that homeowners within half a mile of the landfill get fair market value if they decide to resell. Currently, no guarantee exists.

Finally, Waste Management’s intention to start producing electricity from methane gas sparked discussion, as several board members were skeptical that the plan, one that’s been discussed for years, would ever come to fruition.

Mike Hey, district manager of Waste Management, explained that the amount of gas generated is directly related to how much trash is deposited each day. The extra 1,700 tons per day, compacted by wet weather, is expected to accelerate methane gas production.

"The existing site isn't producing enough methane gas," Addleman said. "... When and if the expansion were to take place, it would take a number of years of adding material to start realizing those volumes. When we can justify the investment, we will put in a waste-to-energy facility."

What's next?

The Host Community Agreement is scheduled to be considered at the DeKalb County Board's next meeting, at 7:30 p.m. March 18.

If the agreement is approved, Waste Management would begin preparing siting application for county approval; preparation can take 5-6 months.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

DeKalb Daily Chronicle
Letter to the Editor
"Don't Accept Garbage"
Published February 27, 2009

Filed by Waste Management of Illinois, Inc.

De Kalb Chronicle – Published February 27, 2009

Don't accept garbage

Date: February 27, 2009 Section: News

To the editor: Is there really no controversy regarding Waste Management's proposal to expand the landfill in DeKalb county to six times its current size in order to truck in trash from Kane and DuPage counties?

Waste Management appears to be buying off the county board with promises of millions in revenue, something difficult for those focused on the budget to turn down. However, the bottom line is not always the most important thing to consider. DeKalb County should not consent to a huge landfill to serve the interests of Waste Management and the more populous counties to the east.

There is no doubt that the appalling amounts of trash Americans generate is a major problem that has received too little attention and too few innovative solutions. However, DeKalb County should not accept Waste Management's tri-county solution by becoming a dumping ground. Let our landfill be expanded only enough to serve our own residents.

Kathy Blair

DeKalb

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DeKalb Daily Chronicle
Letter to the Editor
"Take Care Of Our Garbage, Health, Welfare"
Published February 27, 2009

Filed by Waste Management of Illinois, Inc.

De Kalb Chronicle – Published February 27, 2009

Take care of our garbage, health, welfare

Date: February 27, 2009 Section: News

To the editor: I am a longtime resident of Cortland township that lives on a farm about a mile from the landfill as the crow flies. I remember the conditions that existed before Waste Management took over the operation of the landfill.

It was simply horrendous! Garbage stacked hundreds of feet high, not covered at all. At that time we were told by the county that the counties garbage had to go some where. The state was on the verge of closing the landfill. The landowners around the present landfill got the county to agree that only DeKalb County garbage would be accepted with about a 10 percent amount coming from towns that shared bordering counties. A few years ago Waste Management tried to increase the size of the landfill to take 300 tons of garbage per day. They tried to do it though a secret agreement worked out between the county administrator before taking it to the county board. It backfired.

I guess so much for agreements that only DeKalb County garbage be hauled to the present landfill.

Why should we have to take other counties' garbage?

I am really disappointed in the representatives from the third district, Mr. Anderson and Mr.. Oncken, putting money before the health and welfare of the surrounding residents of the present landfill. We have had to put up with rodent problems and paper blowing over in our fields and fires from burning garbage. I know they live a long distance from the present landfill but have they ever smelled the stench from 200 tons of garbage delivered every day to a landfill. I have and it was from a landfill operated by Waste Management in Indiana. It wasn't just down wind from the landfill, it was in all directions of the landfill. No amount of compensation can be paid to have to put up with that smell day in and day out. Now there will be a school and a 250-home subdivision right next to the landfill.

A guarantee to purchase homes within a half-mile of the landfill that lose their value is not enough by Waste Management. Does the stench stop at one-half mile? Do rodents stop at the half-mile marker?

I guess I am old fashioned when I believe a county should live up to an agreement that they promised to the landowners around the landfill that it should accept only DeKalb County garbage.

Waste Management will not stop trying to expand the landfill! It is not the responsibility of the county fathers to see that other counties' garbage is filling our landfill! It is our county's responsibility to take care of our garbage and the health and welfare of those around the landfill. Do the right thing and don't sell out!

David Yaeger

DeKalb

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PUBLIC COMMENT

DeKalb Daily Chronicle
"DeKalb County Landfill Closer To Expansion"
Published March 18, 2009

Filed by Waste Management of Illinois, Inc.

De Kalb Chronicle – Published March 18, 2009

DeKalb County landfill closer to expansion

Author(s): ELENA GRIMM egrimm@daily-chronicle.com

Date: March 18, 2009 Section: News

SYCAMORE – The DeKalb County Landfill is one step closer to taking in nearly seven times as many tons of trash per day. The DeKalb County Board on Wednesday approved 16-5 a Host Community Agreement, a document negotiated by county leaders and Waste Management of Illinois Inc. that lays out provisions for each entity and is a preliminary step in Waste Management's desire to expand the landfill it runs in Cortland Township.

The agreement will take effect only if all other steps of the landfill project are also approved, a process that will take at least two years, officials say.

At least two county board members didn't support the agreement because it didn't go far enough.

John Gudmunson, R-Somonauk, said that township roads were being "shorted," as the agreement contained no provisions that Waste Management pay for maintenance and repairs on those truck routes; the agreement provides that Waste Management will make improvements on Somonauk Road leading to the facility's entrance and pay for maintenance and repairs from the entrance to Route 38.

The facility, on Somonauk Road south of Interstate 88 in Cortland Township, is in the county's third legislative district. Riley Oncken, who represents District 3, said it was "a difficult decision" but voted against the agreement because it didn't do enough to protect neighboring residents. The other District 3 representative, Ken Andersen, was absent from the meeting because of illness.

"My constituents have expressed very serious concerns about the quality-of-life issues this will raise," Oncken, R-Sycamore, said.

Several residents who live near the landfill raised those concerns during the public comments portion of the meeting.

Sue Garlisch worried that the "constant" methane smell would get worse as more garbage is processed.

Bob Faivre and David Yaeger both opposed trash coming in from other counties.

Under the expansion, waste from other counties would be taken in, the amount being whatever portion is not brought in by DeKalb County to reach the 2,000-ton-per-day volume. Currently, the landfill receives 300-350 tons of trash a day from the county, and just seven years of capacity remain, officials say.

"I think Waste Management truthfully does a good job; it's just a matter of what we want our county to be," said Faivre, who said he's not opposed to an expansion. "Do we want to be the landfill of Illinois or what? I don't think we want to be known as the garbage dump of the Midwest."

Cortland President Bob Seyller thought the agreement neglected the Town of Cortland.

"Representatives from the county and Waste Management repeatedly told me Cortland would benefit," he said. "Now, on the eve of the proposal, the county and Waste Management have nothing for Cortland."

Lee Addleman, a consultant with Waste Management, responded that the company has had discussions with Cortland over the years.

"At this juncture, it has not satisfied them, and we will continue to work with them to see if we can address their concerns," Addleman said, noting that a public hearing will be held in about 10 months.

Under the agreement, Waste Management will pay the county host fees, or royalties, at \$4.60 per ton of waste. Unlike tipping fees, which are strictly for waste management purposes, host fees can be spent elsewhere.

Roger Steimel, a former District 3 representative, called for earmarks for the Forest Preserve District to be removed from the document, adding that a jail expansion should be given higher priority for county spending.

Steimel's opposition to earmarks was echoed as Scott Newport, R-DeKalb, made a motion to amend the agreement by striking earmarks for outdoor education and recycling programs. The amendment failed in a 13-8 vote.

With the host agreement approved, Waste Management will begin preparing a siting application for county approval; preparation can take 5-6 months.

How they voted

Aye: Marlene Allen, Jerry Augsburger, Sally DeFauw, Eileen Dubin, John Emerson, Julia Fauci, Michael Haines, John Hulseberg, Jeff Metzger, Scott Newport, Richard Osborne, Paul Stoddard, Ruth Anne Tobias, Anita Turner, Pat Vary, Steve Walt

Nay: John Gudmunson, Pat LaVigne, Riley Oncken, Mike Stuckert, Mark Todd

Absent: Ken Andersen, Larry Anderson, Kevin Chambliss

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PUBLIC COMMENT

DeKalb Daily Chronicle
"Landfill Hearing Officer Will Be Accommodating"
Published February 26, 2010

Filed by Waste Management of Illinois, Inc.

De Kalb Chronicle – Published February 26, 2010

Landfill hearing officer will be accommodating

By JOHN PUTERBAUGH - jputerbaugh@daily-chronicle.com

Monday's public hearing on the proposed expansion to the DeKalb County landfill will provide community members the chance to present their positions and, in some instances, to participate in the hearing by asking questions of witnesses.

While those who want to present evidence or cross-examine witnesses during the hearing had to apply by Monday, officials say they will do all they can to accommodate peoples' intentions at the hearing, which will be held in the Jenkins Auditorium at Kishwaukee College in Malta.

"There is a provision in the ordinance that [residents] were to register with the county seven days prior to the start of the public hearing," said John McCarthy, an attorney from outside Peoria who will serve as hearing officer. "Having said that, however, I'm usually pretty lenient on allowing people [to speak and participate]."

Part of the issue, McCarthy said, is that he just isn't sure of what peoples' intentions will be. While 10-12 people applied to participate in the hearing, he said some of those people may simply want to make a comment but thought they had to apply in advance to do so.

All residents who wish to do so will be able to make public statements at the hearing, McCarthy said. For those who seek a more involved role, he said he will do everything he can to accommodate such wishes.

"We look to be as fair as possible," McCarthy said. "We will allow people to participate. If they want to actually participate by calling witnesses and the like, that's fine. If they want merely to provide comment, that's also fine."

The landfill hearing will be McCarthy's 15th public hearing serving as either hearing officer or counsel to a specific side. He has taken part in such hearings all over the state pertaining to all sorts of issues, he said.

If necessary, the hearing will continue from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday and on any subsequent days required to allow everyone the chance to speak, DeKalb County Administrator Ray Bockman said. There also will be an informal "public input session" from 7-9 p.m. Tuesday at the same location.

The Tuesday night session will provide residents the chance make further public statements verbally or in writing, Bockman said.

"The goal is a fair hearing on the application that was filed in the most transparent possible environment so that everybody who has a point of view can be heard and all of the evidence can be presented fairly," Bockman said.

DeKalb County Board Chairwoman Ruth Anne Tobias said the proposed expansion would not change anything with the operation of the county landfill, which Waste Management owns and is licensed by the county to run. She said she will be in attendance at Monday's hearing and assumes most of the county board's ad-hoc solid waste committee also will be there.

"This is a very large project," Tobias said. "And it's important for us to know what's being proposed, what protections are being put in place, how the agreement would work, what controls we would have."

Tobias expects five to seven of the 24 county board members to be in attendance, but hopes to see others as well.

"It's not mandatory that county board members attend the meeting, but I hope those that have the time and interest would be able to make it," she said.

If you go

What: Public hearing for the proposed expansion of the DeKalb County landfill

When: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday. Continued sessions will resume 9 a.m.-5 p.m. on subsequent days as long as necessary

Where: Jenkins Auditorium at Kishwaukee College, 21193 Malta Road in Malta

Comments

knowledgeable one 1 wrote on **February 26, 2010 7:19 a.m.**

"Tobias expects five to seven of the 24 board members to be in attendance! WHAT? Can you say done deal. DeKalb county home of the mega dump."