
Input Sought On Recycling Proposal

By Dusty Smith

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A proposal to permit a Materials Recovery Facility, or recycling facility, and a solid waste transfer station on Bears School Road just off the industrial Rt. 606 corridor has been tabled for a month by the board of supervisors' Transportation/Land Use Committee while it awaits a recommendation from the Solid Waste Management Plan Biennial Review Work Group.

The facilities would only be permitted to collect construction and demolition debris, however, requests have been made to expand the definition of that type of waste.

Before the state can permit a solid waste facility, the local government must find that the facilities comply with the Solid Waste Management Plan for that solid waste district. Loudoun formed its own solid waste district. The work group last year declined to amend the solid waste plan to allow the proposed facilities.

The full board appeared on the verge of rejecting the proposal in December, but forwarded it to a committee for discussion of outstanding concerns, such as the site's proximity to the residential Loudoun Valley Estates III subdivision and the amount of traffic that would be generated. During the committee discussion, supervisors wondered whether an approval would matter if the applicant could not convince the solid waste work group to amend the management plan.

Supervisor Jim Burton (I-Blue Ridge), chairman of that group and an opponent of the facility, said he would be "more than happy to revisit the issue."

Under the proposal, Northern Virginia Assets would construct and operate the transfer station, while Ace Waste would build and operate the recycling facility, where representatives promise a 95 percent reuse rate.

The Office of Solid Waste Management has recommended denial of the application and has questioned whether Ace Waste, a company with limited record of operational experience, can achieve its 95 percent recycling claims.

The county planning commission recommended approval of the recycling facility, but not the transfer station.

The applicants have offered to pay \$1.5 million for road improvements if the facilities are approved, or \$500,000 if only one is approved. In addition, the applicants offered to collect county and school construction debris at cost, and provide a free service to cleanup illegal dumps in the county. However, Charles Yudd, assistant to the county administrator, pointed out that those promises could not be tied to the special exception request.

"It's a leap to make a connection between the application and the proposal you're discussing," he said, warning the committee that there could be legal concerns to address, such as accepted contracting practices. Yudd said the application was premature without first being included in the Solid Waste Management Plan.

Supervisor Jim Clem (R-Leesburg) suggested having the work group provide another recommendation.

"I think we ought to go back and see if the [work group] is willing to revise the Solid Waste Management Plan," he said. "If they don't approve it, it's not going anywhere."

Five supervisors and representatives from the county's seven towns are members of the work group.

The Transportation/Land Use Committee has placed the item on its February agenda as it waits for a

recommendation from the work group.

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