

November 3, 2022

The November 3, 2022 meeting of the Warren County Solid Waste Advisory Council was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Ellen Nerbak and was conducted in person at the Warren County Technical School John LaPorta Performing Arts Center. SWAC members present were Thomas Fey, James Banta, Gregory Gaertner, Linda Gabel, Lynn Rutkoski, Joseph Watters, Robert Finke, Janice Lee, James Smith, Debbie Pasquarelli and Ellen Nerbak. The Chair confirmed the presence of a quorum. County staff attending were Solid Waste Coordinator/Planning Director David Dech; Assistant Planning Director Ryan Conklin, Public Health Department Chris McCormick; and Matthew Moench, Esq.

Also in attendance were the applicant and professionals to include Christina PioCosta-LaHue; Mark, Peck, Esq.; Wayne DeFeo, DeFeo Associates; Craig Peregoy, Dynamic Engineering.

Also in attendance were members of the public. Some of the public were affiliated with the New Jersey Land and Community Preservation Alliance which was represented by Daniel Marchese, Esq. and Nathan Mosely, of Shropshire Associates, who conducted a Traffic Study for the NJLCPA.

Notice of this meeting was given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by forwarding a schedule of regular meetings of the Warren County Solid Waste Advisory Council to the Warren County Clerk and The Star-Ledger and by posting a copy thereof on the bulletin board in the office of the Board of Commissioners. Formal action may be taken by the Warren County Solid Waste Advisory Council at this meeting. Public participation is encouraged. In order to assure public participation, those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the meeting should submit any requests for special accommodations one week in advance.

MINUTES

The minutes of the September 1, 2022 meeting were reviewed. With no additions or corrections, it was MOVED by Mr. Finke to approve the minutes of September 1, 2022, seconded by Mr. Fey. All in favor with no abstentions. So moved.

The minutes of the October 6, 2022 meeting were reviewed. With no additions or corrections, it was MOVED by Mr. Finke to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2022 meeting, seconded by Ms. Gabel. All in favor with an abstention by Mr. Gaertner. So moved.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Solid Waste/Recycling

Mr. Dech reported that LMR Disposal is now included in the Solid Waste Management Plan as a Class A Recycling Center. Inclusion into the Solid Waste Management Plan was recommended by SWAC in 2019 provided LMR obtained local planning board approvals. All approvals were obtained and the Commissioners added LMR to the Plan by Administrative Action.

REHS

Newly-designated Health Coordinator Chris McCormick handed out the list of currently exempt recycling centers. They are inspected once a quarter

PCFA

No one present.

NJDEP

No one present.

County Commissioners

No one present.

OLD BUSINESS

Vivaria Ecologics, proposed food waste composting center for inclusion in the Warren County Solid Waste Management Plan

Mark Peck, Esq., attorney for Vivaria, reported the application has been submitted to SWAC and if recommended by SWAC and approved by the Commissioners, the application will then go to NJDEP. The property in question is a 42-acre lot in an industrial zone of Mansfield Township; agriculture is not included. NJ state law now requires food scraps from large food waste generators located within 25 miles of an authorized facility to be recycled; no such processing facility exists in Warren County. A traffic analysis reveals no changes to the traffic pattern, no detrimental impacts are predicted. The facility proposed is state of the art, utilizing the latest technology.

Mr. Peck introduced Craig Peregoy of Dynamic Traffic, a civil engineer for 22 years, who performed the traffic analysis. Mr. Peregoy stated that the existing roadways that are included in the proposed truck route have the capacity to handle the worst case traffic from the compost facility. Single unit trucks, not 18-wheelers, would be the predominant trucks traveling Airport Road to Rockport Road to Blau Road. The facility would be open 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Generally traffic would be the busiest between 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. weekdays. He commented that utilizing the property for other uses could generate much more traffic, especially if it becomes a business park.

SWAC member Mr. Smith asked about the existing Borealis plant; Mr. Peregoy said this project does not concentrate traffic, it disperses traffic onto other roadways. Ms. Pasquarelli asked how it would be controlled, to which Mr. Peregoy replied companies delivering to the facility will be informed of restricted routes. Mr. Peck noted the applicant has been unsuccessful in an attempt to contact the township regarding a truck route.

A resident of Allamuchy reported truck traffic from Route 80 would need to go through the center of Hackettstown to reach Rt. 57, then to Airport Road to reach the facility, suggesting 50 to 100 trucks daily. He asked if consideration had been given to other communities similarly affected.

At this point Matthew Moench, Esq. representing SWAC, said that if anyone is a member of the NJLCPA or any group represented by an attorney, the attorney should speak for the group, lessening the count of speakers.

Daniel Marchese, Esq., attorney for NJLCPA, addressed the SWAC Council and focused first on the traffic report presented by the applicant. He commented that the study was conducted at a time when schools were closed. Applicant's report assumes box trucks coming to the site, but it would eventually be a mix of several types of trucks including tri-axle dump trucks and 18-wheelers.

Bill McGarry, a Hazen Road homeowner, said that trucks go up Hazen Road even though it is weight restricted and commented that there should be a turnaround point for trucks. In response it was suggested that the route to Borealis be used as a possible alternate route.

Pat Fisher-Daly suggested the roads must be measured to see if trucks could pass each other because the road is very narrow and there is no shoulder to allow oncoming large trucks to pass each other. These are residential roads, not industrial.

Laurie Bravo questioned whether the train traffic at the crossing had been analyzed as part of the study. Response was that it was not.

Mr. Cosby of Watters Road asked if emergency services were considered (police, fire, ambulance), as the additional truck traffic could hinder response times.

Carly DeSimone asked about use by non-tractor-trailers and questioned whether office buildings or other businesses might be considered. The response was that office buildings would generate many more cars.

Donna Glasser asked what will prevent trucks from traveling Port Murray Road to Rockport Road as they already do now and what will keep them off Rockport Road instead of a chosen road.

John Koerner asked if a speed study has been done, pointing out that Airport Road is already a raceway adding to the danger level.

Dawn Smith asked how traffic from Borealis would be impacted and how this could be minimized. The response was that no one has looked at this but dispersing traffic would show less traffic at the intersections. A search for an alternative was suggested.

Mr. Dech asked if the Traffic Study factored in trucks coming to pick up finished material. Mr. Peregoy said that it was.

Bob Larson asked how the count of trucks was derived.

Nathan Mosley, of Shropshire Associates, the traffic study engineer for NJLCPA, was introduced. Mr. Marchese compared the Vivaria study to the NJLCPA study and drew differing conclusions and traffic counts. He analyzed traffic at intersections and roadways before the end of the school year in June. Making comparisons, he found significant concerns particularly during the morning hours.

He said that Blau Road is undersized with no center line and is not designed for that type of traffic. There is no proposal for improvements to accommodate the traffic as projected. The railroad on Blau Road narrows to about 16 feet. Mr. Mosley presented truck turning analysis for both directions, and he had concerns with sight distance at certain locations.

SWAC member Mr. Gaertner asked if the sight distance requirement adjusts for smaller trucks, and the response is that NJDOT uses three separate categories of trucks to arrive at the required sight distance.

SWAC member Mr. Smith asked if any diagrams exist for the box trucks, to which the response was negative. Mr. Smith recalled that semi trucks could be delivering wood chips.

Mr. Peck said that both types of trucks would deliver material. Mr. DeFeo said the vehicles will predominantly be smaller, box trucks which are closed trucks for the food waste and wood chips. Bigger trucks are too big for anything but chips. Landscapers will deliver usable chips in closed vehicles or box trucks. There could be tractor-trailers delivering wood chips, but less likely.

Mr. Mosely said there will be some larger vehicles and there must be consideration for them.

Mr. Dech said there are tractor-trailers on these roads already from the moving company. Mr. Farino agreed, saying moving trucks already traverse the roads but not that many. Mr. Peck said that the impact on the level of service on the roadways would be minimal and traffic would be attenuated from the site. The moving company already uses the road with large trucks. If there were some other development, what would that do to the traffic level on Blau and Rockport Roads? The response was that would generate more on peak hour use of roads. This facility means much more traffic activity, predominantly box trucks. Asked what would truck traffic be if built as an industrial park, Mr. Mosely responded it would be the same per traffic study.

Pat Credon questioned Airport Road and the school bus traffic with drop off and picking up children. Mr. Mosely said he did not evaluate but did apply horizontal and vertical considerations for traffic safety. Mr. Credon noted the First Aid station is on Airport Road and said that trucks are coming and going constantly, to which Mr. Mosely replied the existing traffic was taken into consideration. Mr. Credon said there would probably be more trucks traveling at bus transport times.

Perry Edwards asked if Warren County keeps track of accidents and other traffic conditions because the Rockport Road corners are dangerous. SWAC member Ms. Pasquarelli said that the County Planning Department just reviewed accident data. Mr. Dech said crash reports for the police departments are analyzed by the Engineering Office and summarized in an annual report.

Country Meadow Road resident Scott Reyes made a video presentation about composting at an industrial level. Mr. Reyes noted the DEP regulations limit the timing and said the actual conditions impact the neighborhood, so more control is needed over what is coming in. Comparisons of the water usage must be made. Ms. Pasquarelli asked about the water supply expected for this facility. Ms. Nerbak reminded there is no public water for the area of the facility. Ms. Pasquarelli further questioned if this area is within the Highlands Area, to which it is in the planning area, not the preservation area.

Allison Molnar, a Country Meadow Road resident, offered a presentation of endangered species in the area and questioned further the water source as it relates to the habitat. There are 46 wells within a one-mile radius of the site; some neighbors have filed for deeper wells; Ms. Molnar's well is 495 feet deep, highlighting a serious water issue.

Dr. Wainen said that Ridge Creek Farm is proposing a wood chipping facility near Blau Road. Vivaria is unaware of this facility.

Mr. Peck said that Ms. PioCosta objects to comments made that she knows of this proposal. It does not matter if she does or does not know of the wood chipping facility proposed for Blau Road.

Mr. Isaac commented and stated that he is with the NJ Composting Council which is funded by grass roots environmentalists. He spoke in favor of the facility and the need for it.

REMARKS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Ms. Nerbak said February 2, 2023 will be the next SWAC meeting, the annual reorganization. She wished a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year to all.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Panté, Clerk

**Next Meeting Date:
February 2, 2023**