

GUDE LANDFILL CONCERNED CITIZENS

UPDATE 3/15/2009

In response to the persistent efforts of the Gude Landfill Concerned Citizens (GLCC), who represented the concerns of the 499 households in Derwood Station, the County Executive withdrew his proposal to relocate the school bus depot to the site of the Gude Landfill. In the process of these efforts, GLCC discovered evidence of contamination in the ground and surface water leaving the footprint of the landfill. This situation was promptly brought to the attention of both the county Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).

As a first result of this discovery, MDE has required DEP to conduct a major effort to delineate the extent of the contamination plume via a "Nature and Extent" study. This will determine how far under Derwood Station homes the plume has extended. Once delineated, MDE will then require DEP to submit a plan to remediate the contamination, to be followed by the remediation action itself after MDE approves their plan. GLCC will be closely monitoring these actions to ensure that they address our concerns sufficiently and completely. Suffice it to say that these activities might well be a further strain on the county's budget situation.

The county had begun moving ahead with a proposal to move much of the current commercial "yard trim" facility now located at the solid waste transfer station onto a 7 acre site on the east side of the landfill property. This proposal is part of the county's update to the 10-Year Solid Waste Plan which is required by state law. The county has briefed this proposal to the Montgomery County Planning Board at a recent public hearing. GLCC testified at that hearing in opposition to this proposal, with our reasoned arguments much the same as those expressed in opposition to the bus depot. In a nutshell, we argued that no reuse of the landfill site should be approved until such time as the contamination has been remediated and there is no continuing risk of further environmental problems at the site. The GLCC's science-based testimony was sympathetically received. The Planning Board subsequently wrote to the County Council, noting that "we cannot endorse moving the yard trim operation or establishing any other uses on the site of the Gude Landfill without further analysis and a clear

determination that such actions will not exacerbate the existing pollution problems.” To underscore this comment, the Planning Board went on to say that they “expect these questions to be resolved before any mandatory referral on the re-use of the Gude Landfill is submitted to the Planning Board for review.” During a March 10th briefing to the Shady Grove Advisory Committee (a GLCC member is a member of this group as well), the county’s DEP Director informed the gathering that the yard trim facility was “on hold.”

The County Council will have to address these concerns when it considers whether to approve the funding actions necessary to implement the Solid Waste Plan. GLCC will be testifying further against this yard trim proposal before the council at the appropriate moment.

In order to provide the community with the background information, data, and relevant correspondence on these issues, GLCC has launched a new website:

www.gudelandfillconcernedcitizens.com

Please be assured that GLCC will remain closely engaged on these issues and will do its best to protect our interests and property values through responsible civic action.

Gude Landfill Concerned Citizens

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