

Neighbors fight plans for county landfill

By C. L. Rugenstein
staff writer

It's a landfill site-fight. Residents of Oxford and Addison townships, the top-ranked possible sites for a landfill that will handle nearly all solid waste for Oakland County for the next 40 years, are vowing to "fight this every step of the way."

"We find the fact that the Addison site was picked as one of three po-

tential 'finalist' sites appalling and frankly shocking," stated their petition to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and the Landfill Site Advisory Committee, which nominated the sites.

It listed several reasons residents felt that the site was inappropriate, including the lack of major roads in the area, the presence of a school, church and airport near the proposed site and more residents in the

site-area than the research turned up. "We're certainly understanding of their concerns," said county commissioner Larry Pernick, D-Southfield. "But we went into the landfill site selection process knowing that wherever the decision was to put the site, people would be unhappy."

Oxford and Highland had been the top two ranked potential sites. But the ranking changed after an Aug. 31 work/study session of committee of-

ficers, the county and consultants, when the discovery and correction of an error in the selection process was announced.

THE CHANGE bumped Highland to third place and put both leading site candidates in the Oxford area.

Neither Pernick nor Ardath Regan, chairman of LSAC, had seen the letter yet to be able to address particular concerns of the residents.

But, Regan said, "What's more than important is the work we're doing with representatives of Oxford, Addison and Highland, learning what their concerns are and how to address them."

Regan, LSAC, county solid waste officials and their consultants have several upcoming meetings with citizens of Oxford, Addison and Highland to explain what the landfill is, the process for choosing the landfill and to hear citizens' concerns.

Citizens of Oxford will meet with the officials and site committee Wednesday, Sept. 13, at Oxford High School. Highland residents will meet with the officials Monday, Sept. 18. Residents will have the opportunity to voice their concerns at the two meetings.

"I'll be doing a slide show and explaining what the county is doing about reducing the amount of solid waste," said Roger Smith, deputy director of the county's public works department.

ONE ITEM he'll talk about is the county's goal to reduce the solid waste stream by 50 percent by the year 2,005, through recycling and other means.

"Our recycling goal is 35 percent of the waste stream," he said, with the residue from recycling going into the landfill.

Governor Blanchard talked recently about composting all yard clippings by 1993, Smith noted.

"The county's goal is to have county compost sites on line by fall of 1990 — it'll be that much less in a landfill."

The length — 40 years — is a major concern.

Smith said the 40 years was built into the resolution that established the landfill siting committee. The object was to avoid having to go through the "painful process" of selecting another site every five or 20 years.

"You have to have some empathy with the people near the site, though," Smith said. "No matter where you go, people will feel that way."

But the environmental impact of the landfill is of grave concern for the state as well as the county, said State Rep. Mat Dunaskis, R-Lake Orion, whose district includes the two top sites.

POSSIBLE LANDFILL contamination of ground water under Oxford and north Oakland county could reach as far as Detroit, he said.

"The finger can be pointed at both the state and county for lagging behind," said Dunaskis, who heads up the House Recycling Task Force for Landfill Alternatives. "Michigan ranks 28 of 50 states for environmental protection. It's horrendous that, with the Great Lakes and all our inland lakes, we're not a leader. I've got to believe there's a better way."

Are you eligible for surplus food?

The Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLHSA), the community action agency which is responsible for the distribution of surplus commodity food in Oakland County, will be registering eligible Oakland County residents the month of September 1989 for the 1989-90 program year.

All residents must re-register in September. Sites not listed below will register people in October 1989, during the distribution. It is the policy of OLHSA not to discriminate

against any applicant because of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, handicap, political affiliation or beliefs.

The 1989-90 surplus commodity food distribution schedule will be in October and December 1989, and April and July 1990. Persons qualifying for the temporary emergency food assistance program (TEFAP) should make note of the registration dates.

All persons registering must bring proof of total household income, per-

sonal identification and, their Social Security card with them the day of registration. Anyone who receives Social Security as their sole source of income, must also bring their income tax return with them as proof of total income.

Senior citizens who attend a senior center for picking up their commodity food assistance program (TEFAP) should contact that site for the registration date and time. The registration sites for public distributions only are as follows:

Southfield Parks and Recreation,

26000 Evergreen, Southfield, Sept. 21, 12:30-4:30 p.m.
Troy Community Center, 520 W. Big Beaver, Troy, Tuesday, Sept. 26, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Dublin Community Center, 685 Union Lake Rd., Union Lake, Monday, Sept. 25, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
St. Alexander's Church, 27835 Shiawassee, Farmington Hills, Thursday, Sept. 14, 10 a.m. to noon
Walled Lake Fire Hall, 1499 E. West Maple, Walled Lake, Wednesday, Sept. 13, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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