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Perinton Town Board Takes Action on Landfill Issue

The Perinton Town Board has adopted a set of ten recommendations from the Perinton Conservation Board aimed at resolving issues of odors coming from Waste Management's High Acres Landfill in Perinton. The action was taken at the Town Board meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 24.

The Town Board had directed the Conservation Board to determine a factual explanation for the long-term persistence of landfill odors, to review residents' concerns and comments, and to provide recommendations concerning the Town's interaction with Waste Management on this and other operational issues.

The Conservation Board has urged the Town to ask the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to implement (enforce) the recommendations to ensure Waste Management compliance with these recommendations. The Town plans to ask the NYSDEC to agree with the recommendations.

According to Conservation Board chairman Ken Rainis, the recommendations "would represent more stringent air quality monitoring regulations than currently required by New York State. These odors simply have to stop, and we think these recommendations would lead to a long-term solution to odor mitigation."

Rainis anticipates that Waste Management will agree to implement with the recommendations, and he felt that Town residents would welcome NYDEC's support and enforcement of the Town's recommendations.

One key recommendation is to have Waste Management monitor for hydrogen sulfide concentrations at a level of 10 parts per billion. Hydrogen sulfide creates the "rotten eggs" odor that has upset many residents. Currently, hydrogen sulfide is not specifically monitored, and methane emissions from the landfill surface is currently monitored at 500 parts per million.

Perinton Town Supervisor Mike Barker said the Town would immediately interact with the NYSDEC and Waste Management regarding the recommendations. "Our Conservation Board has done a great job of identifying problems and recommending steps toward long-term solutions to odor mitigation. Our Town Board has unanimously accepted the recommendations and looks forward to putting this situation behind us on behalf of our residents." Barker added that the Town has retained legal counsel to represent it in dealings with the High Acres landfill.

State Senator Rich Funke noted in a statement: “Since the fall, I've been working to ensure the DEC is taking the appropriate action on this issue. I'm committed to continuing work to ensure the landfill is held to a standard that meets both state regulations and community expectations. Thanks to Supervisor Barker and the Town Board for strongly advocating for area residents, and to Commissioner Seggos for his commitment to seeing this issue through.”

State Assemblyman Mark Johns added: "It is my highest priority to ensure the health, safety and quality of life issues for my constituents. To that end, I have been working with the DEC and Perinton Supervisor Mike Barker to bring an abatement to the odors emanating from the High Acres landfill."

Brett Provenzano, Superintendent of Schools, Fairport Central School District, also supported the effort. “As a district,” he said, “we are committed to providing stable and consistent environments to optimize learning experiences. In partnership with the Town of Perinton, we acknowledge and care about this important issue and will continue to work toward resolving this concern.”

The Town’s recommendations, several of which are deliberately specific in terms of existing New York State Air Resource regulations, are as follows:

- (1) Direct Waste Management to retrofit Cell 11, and all existing and future solid waste disposal areas, to conform with 6 NYCRR 363-7.1(3)(1).
- (2) High Acres should operate the collection system so that the hydrogen sulfide concentration is less than 10 ppbv above background at the surface of the landfill for odor control and compliance with the NYSDEC one-hour average concentration of hydrogen sulfide not to exceed 0.01ppmv (10ppbv) under 6 NYCRR 257-10.3.
- (3) Compel monitoring for hydrogen sulfide at any surface scan location where methane readings are at “action-level” conditions of 200 parts per million or greater.
- (4) Request vertical and horizontal gas collection well monitoring (temperature, oxygen/nitrogen, and pressure) be performed weekly instead of monthly.
- (5) Direct that Waste Management be required to provide the Perinton Conservation Board with updates on mitigation progress and monitoring at each Perinton Conservation Board meeting. This information would be made public.
- (6) Request Waste Management to immediately suspend all municipal solid waste (MSW) disposal in Perinton temporarily until WM can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the NYSDEC that all mitigation and compliance measures have been met and demonstrated effective in odor emissions.
- (7) Have Waste Management support third-party monitoring of local Fairport schools, as directed by the Fairport Superintendent of Schools, for non-methane organic compounds and hydrogen sulfide until such time as the technical data indicate that there is no health concern due to odors from the High Acres landfill.

- (8) Request that the NYSDEC implement flow-induced vibration requirements that minimize flare-induced vibration occurrences, and compel reporting and resident notification. Require residential/Town notification of gas plant shutdowns exceeding one hour and the potential impacts for odors, vibration, or other potential issues that can immediately impact residents.

- (9) Request that NYSDEC compel on-site backup power (generator) to operate the gas collection and control system such that a power failure or gas plant shutdown will not affect system control (vacuum) requirements, gas/odor collection and control per Title 5 permit that covers the entire facility (both Perinton and Macedon).

- (10) The Town of Perinton establish a question and answer resource on the Town website that provides general information about landfills, odors, and odor control. The PCB recommends that the Town engage a third-party consultant who will work with the PCB's topic outline. Furthermore, the PCB recommends that the consultant compile answers to submitted questions by residents to the Town website. Additionally, a notification should be sent to the residents informing them that this resource is available.

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