

## **Landfill Expansion**

The Town of Seneca must again ascertain our level of cooperation with Ontario County and Casella's operation of the landfill. The Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) is a State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) prerequisite in pursuit of a Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) permit to continue landfill operations. This study will be available to the public and posted on the Ontario County website. The DEIS describes both specific and implied expansion intent. Specific intent includes the Wrap Around (north through west of Stage III) and Eastern (east of Stage III) expansions as well as an ultimate height increase from 997' MSL to 1025' MSL. In addition, the county will acquire 40 acres on the south end of Stage III. 15.5 acres will be used for soil borrowing and provide cover soil for the Stage III expansion. It takes little imagination to speculate future landfill expansion will occur south of the existing Stage III and this is an obvious implied intent.

The Stage III expansions are delineated in both the county's Operations, Management and Lease agreement and the town's Host Agreement. These expansions are contractual obligations of all parties with the intent of continued landfill operations through 2028. The county's acquisition of abutting acreage is not necessarily a contractual obligation however it is operationally sound if the stipulation of perpetual landfill operations is made.

The Town of Seneca has been the host to Ontario County's landfill for over 3 decades. We know the detrimental effects; we're living with them. Three primary compensation offsets may not be as apparent. The current landfill revenue is the equivalent of a town tax rate of \$10.28/\$1,000 of assessed value. The value of the Town Convenience Station is dependant on individual use, likely \$20.00-\$50.00/mo. The opportunity cost to replace the current method of municipal waste disposal is significant; the Town of Seneca is obligated to provide a method of disposal.

A timely decision of the Town Board is required. Landfill operations cannot continue beyond the current Stage VII without a new DEC permit. Any impediment to the issuance of the new permit jeopardizes landfill operations beyond 2014. New cell design and construction typically requires 1 year and will not likely occur until the DEC issues the new permit. The DEC permit process typically takes 4-5 years and the DEIS is a significant 'hurdle'. The level of DEIS acceptance or rejection by the Town of Seneca, a SEQR involved agency, will significantly impact the issuance of the DEC permit.

The Town Board is committed to act in accordance with the will of the constituency. The typical methods of determining that will (survey, petition, referendum, public hearing, etc.) are limited by a 30 day public input period of the DEIS beginning this holiday season. Please submit comments relative to the Seneca Town Board to [supervisor@townofseneca.com](mailto:supervisor@townofseneca.com) or convey your opinion to me and available board members personally between 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, Dec 26-30, 2011 and Jan 9-13, 2012 at the Town of Seneca, Town Hall.

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