

County rejects Marpal expansion

Residents laud freeholders' vote

Posted by the [Asbury Park Press](#) on 07/28/06

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FREEHOLD BUREAU

LONG BRANCH — The Monmouth County Board of Freeholders on Thursday rejected the proposed expansion of the Marpal Disposal waste-transfer station in Tinton Falls following an outcry from area residents concerned about an increase in truck traffic.

Republic Services of New Jersey applied to the county in 2004 for approval to expand its daily capacity at the Wayside Road facility. The company wanted to be able to accept 800 tons a day of bulk items such as furniture, lumber and construction materials. The current capacity is 450 tons a day.

The board voted 4-0 to reject the proposal. Freeholder Theodore J. Narozanick was absent.

Marpal's application to the county was only one step in the process for approval to expand. Approval from the freeholders would have allowed Marpal to apply to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for a permit.

But the freeholders' decision Thursday night during a meeting in Long Branch city hall means the company cannot seek DEP approval, county administrator Louis Paparozzi said.

Representatives from Marpal could not be reached Thursday for comment.

Rich Maio, the general manager for Marpal, has said his company wants to expand operations because it occasionally has to close its doors to incoming waste haulers by 1 p.m. The waste transfer station sorts the bulk waste and trucks most of it to landfills, Larry Zaayenga, the county's solid waste coordinator, has said.

Several residents opposed to the expansion praised the freeholders' decision.

"Thank you for your vote to deny Marpal," said Walter Horan, of the Lincroft section of Middletown. "The trucks are horrendous on Swimming River Road. If you had voted 'yes,' it would have doubled everything."

The freeholders held their first public hearing on the expansion in March 2005. The board postponed a vote after listening to residents' concerns about truck traffic and asked the solid waste planning staff to review truck routes and the amount and sources of waste.

The county reviewed state records and developed a database to track truck traffic, Zaayenga has said, and held a second public hearing July 13.

"We held two hearings to make sure we reviewed all the input necessary to make a decision that was in the best interest of the county and the public," Freeholder Director William C. Barham said.

The board concluded that "it appears likely that any additional capacity will not benefit Monmouth County residents, but will service waste from outside the county, thus adding additional truck traffic to county roads," a resolution adopted Thursday states.

The freeholders also found there are insufficient provisions for recycling at the site, according to the resolution.

Marpal has a permit to recycle metal, wood and cardboard, Zaayenga has said, but there is minimal recycling at the site. The county would like to encourage more recycling but the state has no clear guidelines or regulations regarding recycling at such facilities, Zaayenga has said.

Residents' concerns, however, focused mainly on truck traffic in the area.

"This restored my faith in government," Barbara Thorpe of Middletown said of the freeholders' decision.