

TOWNSHIP OF MIDDLETOWN

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July 11, 2006

Mr. Lawrence Zaayenga
Solid Waste Coordinator
County of Monmouth
Hall of Records Annex
1 East Main Street
Freehold, NJ 07748

Re: Proposed Expansion
Republic Services Bulk Waste Transfer Station
Public Hearing July 13, 2006

Dear Mr. Zaayenga:

I want to take this opportunity to convey Middletown Township's stance on the proposed expansion of Republic Services (Marpal) Bulk Waste Transfer Station operation on Wayside Road in Tinton Falls. I request that this letter and the attached resolution be read into the record of the July 13 public hearing held by the Monmouth County Board of Chosen Freeholders since I am unable to attend.

In 2004, Marpal came to Monmouth County with an application to nearly double daily debris intake at the transfer station in Tinton Falls. Despite local opposition voiced in many forums, including a petition with some 2,000 signatures, resolutions from Middletown and Tinton Falls and numerous speakers at many public meetings, the proposal, unfortunately, remains on the table.

Monmouth County needs to reject Marpal's expansion plan for the sake of its citizenry. Marpal wants to increase their daily intake of roughly 450 tons of bulk trash to 800 tons per day. In theory the days and hours that the facility is permitted to accept bulk waste would remain the same. However, the reality is that trucks stop heading toward the transfer station around mid day because the facility's daily maximum intake has been reached. Increasing the daily maximum intake will encourage more trucks to travel local roads for an extended period of time because it will take more hours for the facility to hit its maximum daily intake. Under the proposal, the facility would also be given three additional hours to process waste and ship loaded trailers out. This means more trucks will be encouraged on local roads up until and after midnight.

While Marpal could clearly profit from the expansion, the cost to the residents of Lincroft, especially those living on and near Swimming River Road, and in neighboring Tinton Falls, is just too great. Many more trucks would be rumbling through local, residential roads in Lincroft in particular and Middletown in general for a longer period of time than what already exists. There's already an extraordinary amount of truck traffic on local, residential roads. The proposed expansion will only exacerbate existing traffic issues and negatively impact the quality of life for residents living in surrounding neighborhoods. Allowing Marpal to expand their operation means encouraging more trucks that bring more noise, light and air pollution into area homes and yards.

Swimming River Road is a corridor for many residential neighborhoods which have been a part of Middletown for more than 30 years. The continual intrusion on these neighborhoods is already having a significant, deleterious impact on the community. Residents already estimate that a large truck travels past their home every two minutes weekdays from 6 a.m. through the evening hours. They also report safety issues related to truck traffic including accidents, speeding, and running of red lights.

Rather than permitting the expansion of this transfer station, a better alternative might be to open another facility in another area of Monmouth County. New sites should be planned in other less dense areas of the county in order to minimize travel distances and prevent the detrimental impact of more traffic to eastern Monmouth County. I understand the county is still studying the proposal as well as concerns raised by residents. I hope when you're done you reject the proposal and make every effort to spread the burden of this necessary service around, thereby preventing one small, residential area from being unfairly burdened.

I encourage Monmouth County to continue working cooperatively with Middletown Township to further improve traffic safety conditions in the Lincroft area. This cooperation has led to a number of positive changes in the last few years. Temporary reduction of the speed limit on a section of Swimming River Road dovetailed with stringent township speed enforcement was used to test our assertion that lower speed limits mean safer conditions. The county also agreed to the township's installation of flashing speed limit signs along Route 520 adjacent to Lincroft Elementary School to alert motorists that they must reduce their speed to 25mph within the school zone as required by state law. Finally, the county also lowered the posted speed limit along another stretch of Route 520 through Lincroft, and adjusted traffic signals at the intersection of Route 520 and Hurley's Lane to include an exclusive pedestrian phase to give seniors living in a nearby apartment complex enough time to cross the busy intersection safely.

Middletown Township is resolute in its objection to expansion of the Republic Services (Marpal) Bulk Waste Transfer Station and asserts that such an expansion will exacerbate current problems. We have already proven we can make positive changes by working together. I sincerely hope this continues to be the case on this and many other issues that affect the community now and in the future.

Sincerely,
Thomas G. Hall
Mayor