

Casella presents draft Host Community Agreement to Dalton officials

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DALTON — Representatives from Casella presented a draft Host Community Agreement (HCA) for the Granite State Landfill to the July 29 working session of the Dalton Select Board. The presentation noted that "although no agreement has been finalized or negotiated, Casella has prepared a proposal for consideration by town leadership."

"We were pleased to be provided the opportunity to present our Host Community Agreement (HCA) proposal to the select board, and through that process, to gain a greater understanding of what issues the select board wishes to address in the HCA," wrote Jeff Weld, Casella's Vice President of Communications.

"We are hopeful that in responding to questions asked by the board, we were able to address some of the confusion and misinformation about the project," he continued. "We expect the dialogue with the town to continue and will be reaching out directly to Dalton residents to keep them informed. We feel strongly that the HCA is an important part of the process and gives residents the best opportunity to help shape the facility's operations, while also creating significant financial opportunity."

The draft HCA is available on the Town of Dalton's website. According to the presentation, Casella regularly enters HCAs with the towns to provide financial benefits to residents and allow them to provide input into shaping the operations of the proposed facilities.

Casella's presentation showed that the first of the permits, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Shoreland Permit, was granted on July 18. The Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (RSA 483-B) and Env-Wq 1400 require this permit for development near public waters.

Casella is still awaiting approval of the following permits: NHDES Wetlands Standard Dredge & Fill Permit,
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US Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands Permit, NHDES Waste Management Division Standard Permit, NHDES 401 Water Quality Certification, NHDES Air Resources Permit, NHDES Groundwater Management Permit, and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) Driveway Per-

mit.

"It is difficult to put a firm timeline on how long permitting activities will take. There are several permit applications currently under review, which provide multiple opportunities for public and regulatory input. We expect this process to continue to take place over the next 12-18 months and for project construction to commence in 2026,"

wrote Weld.

According to the presentation's timeline, if all permits are approved in 2025, construction would begin in 2026, and operations would start in 2028.

"While we are optimistic about the project, we are still early in the permitting review process. We expect to gain more clarity in the weeks and months to come. The reality is that this facility fills a disposal capacity need for more than 60,000 cus-

tomers in New Hampshire and without it, those customers will face increased disposal costs either due to increased transportation or decreased competition in the marketplace," wrote Weld.

Casella officials noted there was a new agreement with the current landowner.

"The project footprint has been scaled down in size such that it will be developed on two existing lots. The lot line adjustment required of

the original, larger footprint is no longer necessary," wrote Weld.

During the presentation, Brian Oliver, Vice-President, Eastern Region, Casella Waste Systems, Inc., stated, "We do have a new agreement with the landowner, and it allows Casella the right to purchase two lots of record, and those lots of record are large enough that they would be able to house the entirety of the landfill, all the infrastructure, and provide nec-

essary setbacks, so the good news about that, no lot line adjustment required for permitting of the landfill. No subdivision discussions need to occur because we do have enough land that we have the right to purchase that we can house all of that on."

The presentation slides are available on the Town of Dalton Web site, and a video of the presentation can be found on the Save Forest Lake YouTube channel.