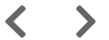


https://www.caledonianrecord.com/news/year-in-review-nces-loses-landfill-expansion-bid-tries-again/article_4cafad4b-50c5-585c-80c7-df9c805a3886.html

Year in Review: NCES Loses Landfill Expansion Bid, Tries Again

Dec 30, 2017

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2017 Year in Review

Eight months after voters rejected a push by Casella Waste Systems to expand its landfill in Bethlehem, the proposal is back, this time through a Casella-funded citizens group that seeks to put two petitioned articles on the March 2018 town meeting warrant.

The petition drive in November mustered 250 signatures of residents.

The first petitioned article asks to see if the town will authorize and direct selectmen to negotiate with Casella for a new host community agreement (HCA) providing for a 100-acre expansion of the town's landfill district during a 20-year period.



Casella is estimating a \$53.7 million benefit package to the town during the 20 years, to include property tax revenue, free curbside trash and recycling pickup, free transfer station access for residents disposing of solid waste, and host community fees payable for each ton of waste accepted at the landfill.

It is the same package residents rejected in March in a 407-526 vote.

If voters ultimately reject expansion, the landfill is expected to reach capacity by about 2021 or 2022 and close.



Although there is a clause in the 2012 settlement agreement with the town that prohibits Casella from purchasing additional land for expansion, Casella in 2015 announced it purchased 123 acres for expansion.

Supporters say it is needed to stabilize the tax rate, though Casella representatives in September told selectmen they are paying too much in property taxes and are considering seeking what could amount to a significant reduction in taxes paid.

The town has also had regular tax rate increases as the NCES landfill has expanded through the years.

Opponents of expansion argue a bigger landfill could equate to negative impacts to the environment and have voiced concerns the town is becoming too reliant on one business for property tax revenue and is becoming known as the dump town.

~ By Staff Writer Robert Blechl (rblechl@caledonian-record.com)

