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**Firm still has hope**

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 **TEMPLETON-** Despite an adverse town meeting vote last week, the Vermont company that wants to build a new landfill said it will "seek to work" with town officials to reach an agreement on its plans.

"The process of assuring a community about the environmental and fiscal benefits of a facility is occasionally a long one," John W. Casella, chairman and chief executive officer of Casella Waste Systems, said in a prepared statement.

"We will continue to work through the process and with town officials to fully explain to citizens the long-term benefits of the project and resolve any doubts," Mr. Casella said.

He issued the statement Friday, the day after residents voted not to allow out-of-town garbage to be brought to the landfill, off Route 202.

Richard Norris, chief financial officer of Casella, did not return telephone messages left yesterday afternoon seeking further comment.

New England Waste Services, which is a subsidiary of Casella, and the Templeton Board of Health signed a contract last year that would allow the company to dig up the town's closed, unlined 12-acre landfill and build a new double-lined landfill next to it. The town would make a minimum of $1.1 million annually from the deal.

But a large number of residents opposed the project, and they turned out in force during Thursday's special town meeting.

"I believe we still feel that the legality of that contract is in question," said John M. Henshaw, a member of Templeton Citizens Against the Dump, during an interview yesterday.

His group also plans to investigate the site assignment issued in 1972 that allowed the dump to be built on the property. He questions the contention that the 58 acres of the parcel were set aside for use as a landfill in this site assignment, rather than just the 12 acres.

The anti-dump group wants to work with people in Templeton and surrounding towns such as Phillipston and Royalston to come up with solutions on how to deal with waste, Mr. Henshaw said.

"We can't just ignore this solid-waste problem," he said.

And the group will continue to move forward with its effort to recall the health board, he said.