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BERNARDS TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

## Quarry 'termination' vote set in Bernards Township Wednesday night

By W. JACOB PERRY Staff Writer 2 hrs ago

**BERNARDS TWP.** - A resolution that would "terminate" a redevelopment plan at the Millington Quarry is scheduled for a vote at a special Township Committee meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 24, at Ridge High School on South Finley Avenue.

The resolution does more than just kill the redevelopment plan, which many residents in town have attacked as being overly intense. It would also prevent the quarry from being developed with anything other than two-acre housing as it is now zoned.

It would do that by rescinding a "non-condemnation development area" designation that the committee applied to the site last February to allow alternative uses.

The redevelopment plan calls for the 180-acre quarry tract on Stonehouse Road to have a public lake and park, 235 homes, a hotel with up to 250 rooms, two restaurants, 140,000 square feet of retail space and 60,000 square feet of office space.

If redeveloped as two-acre housing, the quarry would end up with about 40 homes and a privately owned lake.

Township officials have expressed hope that the site would be developed differently. That led them to use state criteria to deem it a "non-condemnation development area," which would allow other uses.

That ultimately led to the controversial redevelopment plan.

But on Jan. 9, Mayor John Carpenter announced that the committee would schedule a vote to terminate the plan. Within days, however, a community opposition group, Friends of Stop the Millington Quarry Plan (STQP), asked the committee to go further and rescind the "non-condemnation redevelopment area" designation.

"We want to ensure that Basking Ridge does not become entangled in a divisive mess like this again," STQP said in a press release.

Jeff Tittel, director of the New Jersey Sierra Club, which has also come out against the redevelopment plan, issued a statement on Tuesday saying approval of the resolution would be "a victory for the environment and good planning."

"The size and scope of the project is too large for the site and does not fit in with the character of the community," Tittel said. "The project encourages sprawl and over development which results in increased storm water runoff, waste water, water pollution, contamination and increased flooding. The high-density plan would also contribute traffic congestion and air pollution for the town."

