



MOHAWK TOWPATH SCENIC BYWAY RECEIVED

NOV 23 2015

TOWN OF HALFMOON
Office of the Supervisor

COALITION, INC.

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<http://www.MohawkTowpath.org/>

November 20, 2015

Mr. Keith Goertz, Regional Director
N Y S Department of Environmental Conservation
1130 North Westcott Road
Schenectady, NY 12306-2014

Re: Permit #4-0126-0033-00001 Area 7 Development
Town of Colonie Landfill to increase height and width of current landfill operation.

Dear Mr. Goertz:

The Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway Coalition, Inc. (Coalition) expresses a major concern with the proposal to increase the operational capacity of the Town of Colonie Landfill in both height and breadth. Concerns include the visual impact, odor, air quality and noise impacts of a large increase to the present capacity of the Colonie Landfill.

As early as 1998 the Colonie Landfill was recognized as an issue when evaluating a proposal to designate a scenic byway to tell the story of the Erie Canal and the 'waterway west'. During an evaluation for our Scenic Conservation Action Plan in 2007 the landfill was recognized as being part of a "working landscape" in the Town of Colonie. Neighboring communities experienced many years of odors which emanated from the site and a changing landscape that makes it increasingly difficult to appreciate the area's heritage. The Byway and specifically the Executive Committee has had to take a long hard look at another 20 year expansion.

Major concerns that threaten to trample the Byway stories and further impact the surrounding area include:

- An addition of some 80 feet to the man made mound and its visual impact to the surrounding communities of the Towns of Waterford, Halfmoon and Clifton Park in Saratoga County. The current landfill is not consistent with the rolling hills in neighboring communities. Instead, it has become a "mountain". Adding another 80 feet to the present site will make it appear as a ski mountain, without trees, and not a golf course as some claim. The face of the proposed expansion will have a vertical drop similar to some of our local ski slopes. Also for comparison, the elevation of Route 9 rises about 80 feet between Cohoes Crescent Road and the entrance to the existing landfill operation. The visual character from points north in Saratoga County will be further diminished and further dominate the view of the Mohawk River as it flows southeasterly to meet the Hudson. Additionally, the planned expansion will

adversely affect the character of the Town of Halfmoon Historic District, namely Church Hill Road and Canal Road. There is also the question of daily unsightly conditions along a number of public highways which are part of the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway. Computer simulations of the views from points on the Byway are warranted. Specific sites that come to mind include:

1. Route 9 in Halfmoon at the intersection of Crescent Vischer Ferry Road
 2. Fonda Road in Waterford between Mallards Landing N and Pine Park Terrace
 3. Riverview Road at the Clifton Park/Half moon town line
 4. Across the open field east of 279 Riverview Road in the hamlet of Vischer Ferry and
 5. From the west bound Cohoes Crescent Road (at approximately 42.8023/ -73.7220).
- The projected 510 foot height may have an impact on air traffic and may exceed FAA height regulations regarding a five mile radius from the airport runways to the boundaries of the landfill. We would like to see verified measurements that determine that the proposed landfill expansion would not fall within the 5 mile radial range.
 - Questionable air quality issues with increasing capacity of the current landfill. Have air quality studies been done and thoroughly examined? Residents and visitors with lung disease or similar impairments may be endangered by emissions and drifting fungal spores.
 - Storm water management and runoff from the landfill raises a serious question of where the water is contained. Would any of the runoff enter the adjacent Mohawk River. The City of Cohoes draws its drinking water from water supplied by the Mohawk River at a location south and downstream of the landfill. The City also maintains a water reservoir within close proximity to the southern boundary of the landfill.
 - Presently, there are areas of the landfill where water runs off of the landfill directly across the Cohoes-Crescent Road from lack of culverts and drainage ditches.
 - There is also concern about operational noise as landfill operations move to the north closer to the Mohawk Towpath Byway and Saratoga County residents and new residential areas along the river in Colonie.
 - In light of recent violations would it not be prudent to have the Landfill reimburse the State for full time inspector for oversight and audit?

The Mohawk Towpath Byway is committed to the promotion, preservation and protection of the historic heritage of the old Erie Canal route from Cohoes and Waterford to the emerging economic revitalization of the City of Schenectady. We have been diligently working to spread the word about the many historic, cultural, and recreational benefits of the lower Mohawk River corridor. The Town of Colonie Landfill is a working landscape in that corridor; however, one that has reached its capacity. On behalf of the Mohawk Towpath Scenic Byway, we implore your due diligence in addressing the genuine concerns expressed above in relation to any expansion of the current landfill operation.

Sincerely,



Eric J. Hamilton
Executive Director



Lawrence D. Syzdek
Chairman

cc: Donald Hallock, Manager
Honorable Paula Mahan, Supervisor
Honorable Phil Barratt, Supervisor
Honorable John Lawler, Supervisor
Honorable Kevin Tollison, Supervisor
Honorable J. Bert Mahoney, Mayor
Honorable George Primeau, Mayor
Honorable Neil D. Breslin, Senator
Honorable Kathleen A. Marchione, Senator
Honorable John T. McDonald, III, Assembly
Honorable Phil Stec, Assembly
Honorable James Tedesco, Assembly