

DOCKET NO. 111 - An application of : Connecticut
Waste Management of Connecticut, Inc., :
and Bio-Energy Partners for a Certificate : Siting
of Environmental Compatibility and Public : Council
Need for the construction of a 3.33 MW :
electric generating landfill gas management :
facility in New Milford, Connecticut. : November 22, 1989

OPINION

On March 31, 1989, Waste Management of Connecticut, Inc., (WMCT) and Bio-Energy Partners (BEP) applied to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) to construct, operate, and maintain a landfill gas management facility (LGMF) in the Town of New Milford, Connecticut.

The proposed LGMF, in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes 16a-35k, would utilize a renewable resource, reduce the State's dependence of oil, and diversify the State's energy supply mix. The proposed LGMF would generate useful electric power from a fuel that is presently available and now wasted, offset the need to import and purchase approximately 50,000 barrels of oil per year, and reduce sulphur dioxide emissions. WMCT, through a Department of Public Utility Control-approved electric purchase agreement with Connecticut Light and Power Company, would provide 16 million KWh per year to the electric grid over a ten-year period. Similar operating facilities have proven reliable as small power producers providing a constant supply of electricity.

The location of the LGMF would be on previously disturbed, barren soil just east of the New Milford landfill proper and immediately adjacent to its fuel source and interconnection to the electric grid. A 14-acre wetland that abuts the proposed site would not be significantly affected. A survey revealed no rare or endangered species and no unusual or sensitive habitats at the proposed site. Also, no discharges to the groundwater would be anticipated during construction or operation activities. This site is zoned industrial and the proposed LGMF would be a safe distance from the waste disposal operations and adequately buffered from adjacent land uses. The construction of the proposed LGMF would not have a significant effect on historic or archaeological resources.

Noise levels at WMCT property lines closest to any residences would be substantially less than typical traffic noise now existing along Route 7. The building would be constructed as an acoustical container, placed between the landfill and dense vegetative areas, and oriented to emit noise toward the landfill, away from other landuses to the north, south, and east. Noise from construction or operation traffic would not be significant.

The air quality surrounding the landfill would be improved by the proposed facility which would use gas wells to collect and burn methane and organic, odor-bearing compounds of the LFG. Non-stop operation of the proposed turbine would be within all federal and State emission standards. The volume of carbon dioxide produced by the combustion of LFG would be no different than if the naturally occurring gases dissipated into the atmosphere at the landfill.

The LGMF would be within all federal and State building codes. All applicable, recognized safety standards would be adhered to and met. Similar operating facilities managed by Waste Management of North America have proven to be safe and reliable. Automatic controls, fail safe shut downs, and state-of-the-art fire suppression systems would be installed and maintained to provide safe and efficient operation of the proposed facility and surrounding area. Also, WMCT would consult with the Town of New Milford in preparing an emergency response plan.

Based on the record in this proceeding, the Council finds that the effects associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of a LGMF at the proposed site, including effects on the natural environment; ecological integrity and balance; public health and safety; scenic, historic, and recreational values; forests and parks; air and water purity; and fish and wildlife are not significant either alone or cumulatively with other effects, are not in conflict with the policies of the State concerning such effects, and are not sufficient reason to deny the application, and therefore, the Council will issue a Certificate for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed LGMF in the Town of New Milford. The Council will require WMCT to submit a Development and Management (D&M) plan for approval prior to the commencement of facility construction. This D&M plan shall include provisions to ensure that the facility will be constructed and operated in a safe, reliable, and environmentally-sound manner as proposed by the applicant in the proceeding.