

Press Release
COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



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**COMMUNITY OPPOSITION FORCES
WITHDRAWL OF CONTROVERSIAL WASTE
TRANSFER STATION APPLICATION**

(HOLBROOK – NY) – After months of community input the application for the proposed Green Rail Inc. waste transfer station located at Furrows Road on the Holbrook and Holtsville border has officially been withdrawn – signifying a victory for the community advocates who fought feverously to oppose the project.

Residents along Furrows Road and throughout the Holbrook and Holtsville communities have fought with the New York State DEC to protect their health on several occasions by preventing local companies from dumping waste right in their backyards. Green Rail Inc.'s proposed waste transfer station could have put up to 900 tons of waste per day right in the middle of this community. A \$700,000 fine was issued by the DEC to an adjacent property for illegal sand mining and the dumping of toxins less than a month prior to the submission of the Green Rail application.

Suffolk County Legislator Bill Lindsay has taken several steps to give residents a greater voice and stood as an advocate for the community at several public hearings, including one of his own in February of this year. Over 200 residents packed the auditorium of the Suffolk County Legislature that night, to voice their opposition to this project by highlighting not only the health and safety concerns, but the long-term impact this project would have on the environment.

“I want to thank all of the residents who have been so engaged in opposing this detrimental project. Your efforts serve as a vital reminder that community engagement can make all the difference,” said Legislator Lindsay. “Though this is a small victory in a long fight to protect and preserve our neighborhood, our residents should be proud. I will continue to fight alongside them to effectuate policy change that increases fines for crimes against the environment and our community.”

With the rallying motto, “we will not be moved in our effort to protect our health, our homes, and the environment,” residents led letter writing, phone calling, and social media campaigns to spread their message that this project would further degrade the culture and safety of their community and the health of its residents. Local civic associations, the Holbrook Chamber of Commerce, and several community groups joined together with local elected officials to push back against the proposed waste transfer station.

“This is a victory for the Holbrook and Holtsville community, whose members have worked tirelessly with one voice to prevent this project from setting up shop in their backyards,” said Islip Town Councilwoman Trish Bergin.

“This is an example of the citizens and government working for the good of the community,” said Islip Town Councilwoman Kate Mullen.

Suffolk Legislator Bill Lindsay, Islip Town Councilwomen Trish Bergin and Kate Mullen stood with Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, State Senators Tom Croci and Phil Boyle, Assemblyman Al Graf and several other elected officials to give residents a forum to voice their concerns and promote positive change.

A message posted on the “Stop the Furrows Road Project” Facebook Page, congratulates its over 1,000 members for their efforts but casts a light that this fight will not be their last.

Excerpts from the post read:

“Withdrawal by the applicants validates the importance of grassroots civic engagement but it does nothing to remediate existing conditions on the Furrows Road industrial parcels, their potential adverse health impacts, or the underlying policy and enforcement deficiencies.

Rather than raising the flag of surrender, it is far more likely that the applicants are placing the proposal on layaway. Rather than a time to celebrate, it is time to redouble our effort. While important, this is a small and likely temporary victory in what has been, and promises to continue to be, a large and long-lasting battle to reign in irresponsible commercial activities. In order to deny the application, DEC would be required to document all of the deficiencies and discrepancies that justified denial; those would likely be made a part of the permanent record. By withdrawing the application, the applicants

avoid the potential impact of such an adverse ruling and likely preserve the right to revise and resubmit the application at some future date, whether for the same location or a different location.

The withdrawal confirms that collective effort can bring results. History confirms that the fight is far from over.”

Though a victory for community organizing and a significant short term relief for many community members; the community remains vigilant, ready to stand up and fight any future development that threatens their community’s way of life, the environment, and most importantly the health of its residents.

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*Suffolk County Legislator Bill Lindsay is the Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, Vice Chairman of the Parks & Recreation Committee, and Vice Chairman of the Government Operations, Personnel, Information Technology, and Housing Committee. Bill represents the 8th legislative district which consists of Bayport, Blue Point, Bohemia, Holbrook, Holtsville, Oakdale, Sayville, West Sayville parts of North Patchogue and Ronkonkoma.