

Howard Anne Baumann

Representing the Nordheim Sunset Review Group

My name is Howard Anne Baumann and I'm from the city that coined the phrase, "Don't Dump on Nordheim." For over three years we have attended RRC hearings on the matter of granting a permit for a waste disposal site that will occupy 200 acres of land that has had cattle and raised crops. Now that land will be a "wasteland" a quarter of a mile from our town.

We recently held a town hall meeting to discuss changes we feel should be made in the RRC's guidelines concerning permits for waste disposal sites and I would like to share those with you now on behalf of the Nordheim Sunset Review Group.

We feel that land location for waste disposal sites should be treated with more consideration for the surrounding community. Any operation of this magnitude dealing with waste disposal needs to be at least 2-5 miles from a town, residences, schools, hospitals and public gathering places. The land devaluation aspect for adjacent landowners and residences for any waste disposal permit application should also be considered.

In addition, guidelines need to include prohibiting placing waste disposal sites from being located on a natural incline that allows runoff which could contain toxic waste materials. Water wells and aquifers should be at least a half mile from these 25 foot deep pits to avoid being contaminated by ground water seepage from the disposal pits.

In our particular experiences with the permitting process, we found that the applicant believes that the land they chose is the "perfect" location, as it is centrally located for their trucks. However, we don't feel that transportation safety issues were adequately addressed since this was not within the realm of the Railroad Commission authority. Since the situation poses problems for our school buses, vehicles and farm equipment that are directly affected by the permitting process, we recommend that this consideration be included in the information the RRC utilizes in making determinations.

Finally, the granting of any permit application by the Railroad Commission should reflect ALL aspects of the RRC's mission statement. "Stewardship of natural resources and the environment" and "concern for personal and community safety" should be every bit as important as the "support of enhanced development and economic vitality for the benefit of Texans." In our experience, the RRC needs to work on fulfilling the first two of these mission statements because they do not seem evident in their decisions.

Thank you.

In a nutshell, as old and trite as it may be, "Money talks, and the common good of the people walks."