

Real People – Real Stories

Snow Hill, NC (Greene County)



Exchange Project
BECAUSE OUR ENVIRONMENT AFFECTS OUR HEALTH

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Significance of Case: A citizens' group initiated legal action in 1998, claiming the Greene County Board of Commissioners approved a landfill site located in Castoria, NC without following proper procedures or considering alternative locations. After four years of community pressure and an NC Court of Appeals opinion in favor of the citizens' group, the Board re-voted, overturned its original decision and decided not to approve any of the proposed landfill sites. This case was the first to fall under a North Carolina statute, passed in 1999, which established a protocol for approving landfill sites within one mile of an existing facility.

The Community

Greene County is located in the eastern region of North Carolina with a population of approximately 19,000 people (United States Census Bureau, 2000a). Fifty-two percent of the population are White and 41% are Black (United States Census Bureau, 2000a).¹ Sixteen percent of families in Greene County live below the poverty line (United States Census Bureau, 2000a). The largest industries in the County include manufacturing (24%) and educational, health and social services (21%) (United States Census Bureau, 2000c). Livestock, poultry and grain operations have grown in recent years, and the county is among the top five swine producing counties in the state (North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2004).

The Board of Commissioners in Greene County is charged with, among other duties, approving sites for landfills in its jurisdiction. Prior to the siting decision discussed in this case, Greene County had two functioning landfills²: one construction and demolition debris landfill and one municipal solid waste landfill. The municipal solid waste landfill was closed in January 1998, five months after the County contracted with a private company to open a new one ("Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners," 2001).

As the county seat, Snow Hill served as the location for the official proceedings regarding the landfill siting process in this case, as it was a county issue, but the community was also affected by the issue because of its proximity to the potential sites. Snow Hill was once a major trading depot on the Contentnea Creek and was formally founded in 1828. Snow Hill is centrally located within 15-25 minutes of four cities, including Wilson, Kinston, Goldsboro and Greenville; it is connected to all of these cities by major highways (Greene

¹ The 2000 US Census race statistics referenced in this case study are calculated based on data assigned to seven response categories: White, Black, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Some other race, and Two or more races. Statewide, Whites represent 72% of the population and Blacks represent 22% (United States Census Bureau, 2000b).

² Another county municipal solid waste landfill was closed in 1983.

County Chamber of Commerce, n.d.). According to the 2000 US Census, Snow Hill has a population of approximately 1,500 people (United States Census Bureau, 2000d). In comparison to the County as a whole, a larger proportion of the population in Snow Hill is Black: 47% percent of those living in Snow Hill are white and 49% are Black. The median family income is \$29,213 and fifteen percent of the families in the Town live below the federal poverty level. Thirty-eight percent of the population in Snow Hill over the age of 25 have less than a high school level of education (United States Census Bureau, 2000d).

Castoria, the small, unincorporated town closest to the disputed Bridgers Tract, is located 5-6 miles north of Snow Hill (MapQuest.com, n.d.; RandMcNally.com, n.d.). Schools, churches, several hog operations, and the existing county construction and demolition debris landfill are all located near the Bridgers Tract site ("Greene County battles judge's order blocking proposed landfill," 1998). At least two of the nearby churches serve predominantly Black congregations, and most families in the area are classified as low-income ("N.C. Environmental Justice Case Expected to Clarify Landfill Law," 2001).

Hazard

In August 1997, the Greene County Board of Commissioners signed a contract with Addington Environmental, Inc. (AEI)³ to create a new regional⁴ solid waste landfill⁵ in the county. Greene County officials calculated that a new regional solid waste landfill would bring in approximately \$1 million per year in revenue for 30 years. The officials said this revenue would help cover the costs of a new jail and upgrades to a sewer facility serving Snow Hill and Hookerton, two towns located in Greene County ("Group secures restraining order opposing landfill," 1998).

"I think that public officials try to do the right thing but some of them are motivated by money or special interests, whoever is trying to tell them what to do, influence them. If they think that the county will get a lot of revenue from putting this landfill in our county, then they are probably going to think it's a better idea than you or I would."

-Community Member

³ AEI is a subsidiary of Republic Industries and is based in Louisville, KY. On July 3, 2000, the Board of Commissioners consented to AEI's name change to Republic Services of North Carolina, LLC.

⁴ The landfill was sometimes referred to as a regional landfill ("Greene County battles judge's order blocking proposed landfill," 1998), sometimes as a county landfill ("N.C. Environmental Justice Case Expected to Clarify Landfill Law," 2001) and sometimes as a municipal landfill (in permit) (North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Division of Waste Management, n.d.). Articles that call it a regional landfill, refer to a previously existing county landfill near the proposed site. Newspaper articles referred to the landfill as regional but government documents (e.g., permits, public comment responses) used the term municipal.

⁵ Landfills, unlike dumps, are designed in such a way as to keep trash away from surrounding soil, groundwater, rain, and air exposure. They may be built above or into the ground and have been required to have a liner of some kind to contain the waste since 1991. While other types of landfills sometimes use clay liners, municipal solid waste landfills usually rely on plastic liners. Landfills are also required to have a layer of dirt, tarp or spray applied daily to seal the trash and keep out pests (Freudenrich, n.d.).

Commissioners further stated that taxes would have to increase by twenty percent to cover these costs if the landfill weren't built ("Greene County battles judge's order blocking proposed landfill," 1998).

Rural counties, such as Greene County, NC, are typical locations for landfills. Landfills require large amounts of open space so municipalities often depend on less developed areas for waste management facilities (Allegod, 2000). Waste management companies frequently pitch regional landfills to impoverished communities as a boon for the

"The political climate in eastern North Carolina, as you know, isn't the best. Good jobs aren't plentiful, and the counties are always looking for ways to generate revenue. And when you have large corporations coming in and shopping around for places to put a landfill, they always make it sound a lot better than it actually is for the community. I always wonder, if the landfill is such a great deal, then why don't you want to keep it in your community so *you* can profit from the income generated?"

-Community Member

local economies (Allegod, 2000; The New Rules Project, n.d.). Although Greene County had among the lowest rates of waste disposal per capita in the state (North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Waste Management, 2000), approximately 1,500 tons of garbage per day from surrounding North Carolina counties⁶ would have been disposed into the planned landfill ("Citizen's group loses in latest effort to halt landfill," 1998; "Group secures restraining order opposing landfill," 1998).

Greene County's contract with AEI required the company to identify suitable sites for the landfill's location, including "any and all potential development sites" in the County ("Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners," 2001). Four months after the 1997 agreement and before the Board of Commissioners voted on the site, AEI purchased a 308-acre tract of land called Bridgers Tract ("Group secures restraining order opposing landfill," 1998). The Bridgers Tract was located in Greene County near Castoria on NC Highway 91, between Snow Hill and Walstonburg and within one mile of each of the two previously mentioned landfills.

"These companies think they can just waltz into these tiny little backwater towns and just make these decisions that will affect an entire community, with little to no regard for the implications of these decisions. These decisions are monumental. This wasn't just about a little bit of trash. We knew enough to know that once you start being viewed as a dumping ground for Raleigh or some large city that doesn't even have to be in the state, you are in for a lot of problems."

-Community Member

⁶ The landfill permit allows for waste disposal from sources anywhere in the state (Norton, 2004b), however the specific sources and counties that would transport their waste to the new landfill were not described in the available articles. Moreover, concerns existed that the landfill could be receiving waste from surrounding states; although only two landfills in North Carolina were authorized to accept waste from other states at the time of the siting process, at least one newspaper article said this could potentially change (Allegod, 2000).

Response

When a group of community residents learned about the proposed site, they began investigating the landfill's potential impact on the community, eventually forming the non-profit citizens' group, Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth (GCRG) to organize against the landfill and disseminate information to the broader community. The Board of GCRG began investigating the impact of regional landfills on neighboring counties, including Bertie and Forsyth Counties, and conducted internet research on landfills nationwide, holding community meetings at a local Black church to discuss their findings and writing letters to the editor of the local newspaper, *The Standard Laconic*. Many residents expressed anger

"Well, I became involved very early on because I learned that a particular piece of land . . . was being sited for a regional landfill; in fact, it was in the process of being approved by the county commissioners without any knowledge of community residents. That just did not sit well with us as a community."

-Community Member

over the lack of community input in the decision making process. Newspaper articles also reported community members' concerns over having another landfill in the area, such as an increase in truck traffic as waste was transported from other regions in NC to the landfill; the offensive odor of the waste; and the stigma of having another landfill in their community

(Harne, n.d.; Wall, 2002c). Health concerns were also mentioned, though the specific health problems of concern were not described (Wall, 2002a; 2002b). Spurred by these concerns and the perceived lack of response from county and state officials, GCRG members began an active campaign to educate the general public about the potential effects of the proposed regional landfill, and they began to pressure county commissioners to respond to their questions.

In spite of widespread apprehension, not all community residents were opposed to the proposed landfill. As one resident stated in a letter to the editor printed in *The Standard Laconic*, "I support the landfill 100 percent." (Creech, 2000). In addition, *The Standard Laconic's* publisher, Cliff Clark, noted that "this newspaper has supported the idea [of the regional landfill] from its conception and will continue to do so. . . . I believe the landfill will have a tremendous positive effect on the services this county will provide to its citizens in the future."

"Partnerships were built in the community around this issue, and we were successful in building a large membership in GCRG. . . . We worked closely with two black churches and helped each other. I think we had more power through those partnerships, I would say. It's harder to fight against a large united group than small groups who can be divided and conquered."

-Community Member

"I already had an idea of the potential for leachate and groundwater pollution, but we all became more aware of potential problems as we started going out into the community and visiting other landfills in neighboring counties. . . . We heard about the traffic volume and noise problems, the stench and impact on property values. Who wants to live next to a dump? Now, we're not trying to push our problems off on anyone else, but we think that decisions should be fair. If we didn't create the trash, then we shouldn't have to be the repository for it."

-Community Member

Complaints in media reports centered around the site selection process. In 1999, North Carolina passed General Statute § 153A-136C, establishing new rules about the development of landfills. This statute was created as a result of the Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898 signed by President Clinton that required the United States government to address environmental injustices in poor and minority communities.

Much of the concern over the landfill related to the requirements mandated by this relatively new state law; the Greene County landfill siting process was considered the first instance to fall under its domain ("N.C. Environmental Justice Case Expected to Clarify Landfill Law," 2001).

Under the statute, local governments must consider alternative sites, review socioeconomic and demographic data, and hold a public hearing before siting a landfill within one mile of an existing landfill in order to determine if communities of color or poor communities were being disproportionately impacted ("N.C. Environmental Justice Case Expected to Clarify Landfill Law," 2001). Many residents claimed that AEI did not present, and therefore that Commissioners did not consider, alternative sites. AEI did submit

"Whenever you're going to build one of these landfills, there were certain hoops you had to jump through, and they didn't do it. They went out, and they bought the land, and they were getting ready to site the landfill. The requirement by state law is that they must consider other sites, and they didn't. They just flat went in, picked the site that they wanted, bought the land, and they were ready to start construction."

-Community Member

an evaluation of the Bridgers Tract to the Board of Commissioners in April 1998, but this was four months after the company had already secured the site. The evaluation outlined "exclusionary zones" where other locations were disqualified as potential landfill sites because they did not meet criteria set by the company ("Group secures restraining order opposing landfill," 1998).⁷ Though the study report specifically stated that sites in the non-excluded area would be reviewed, no such locations were evaluated in the report ("Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners," 2001). In

⁷ The ten exclusionary factors included: "geological characteristics, hydro-geological characteristics, groundwater well proximity, socioeconomic and demographic information, wetland proximity, proximity to highways and population centers, effects on endangered species, cultural resources or natural and historical preserves, availability of property, sufficiency of soil for cover, and airport safety" ("Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners," 2001).

August 1998, AEI submitted a report on socioeconomic and demographic data for the area surrounding the Bridgers Tract (ibid.).

On October 5, 1998, the Greene County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing to discuss the landfill site, as required by the statute. The hearing had been

“When the public comment session was opened up, people in the audience hopped on their feet. . . . The board of commissioners [did not] have enough space where their meetings were held, so they moved public hearings to the courthouse, and we packed the courthouse. Never had they seen that kind of public concern in this county.”

-Community Member

announced approximately one month in advance in the local paper. At the meeting, held at the Greene County Courthouse, the Board received “extensive public comment” (“Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners,” 2001). Hundreds of people attended the hearing and the meeting lasted over three hours (“Greene County battles judge's order blocking proposed landfill,” 1998). AEI presented information to the Board about other sites; however, they were all located, at least in part, in exclusionary zones (“Greene Citizens for Responsible

Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners,” 2001).

The Board voted to approve the site after the hearing closed and, on November 2nd, they met again to confirm approval of the site (“Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners,” 2001). At this meeting, the Board said it had an “additional opportunity to consider alternative sites,” though a later court decision found no records substantiating this claim (“Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners,” 2001).

Legal Action

In response to the Board’s decision, a citizens’ group, Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth (GCRG),⁸ initiated legal action against the Board of Commissioners in the Greene County Superior Court in October 1998⁹ to prevent AEI from moving forward with the landfill development (“N.C. Environmental Justice Case Expected to Clarify Landfill Law,” 2001). Superior Court Judge James D. Llewellyn granted GCRG a restraining order that temporarily prevented the Board from taking any additional action on the Bridgers Tract landfill development. The Commissioners and AEI promptly went to court to have the restraining order lifted (“Greene County battles judge's order blocking proposed landfill,” 1998).

⁸ The group was referred to as Greene County Citizens for Responsible Growth in some articles; however, this case study uses the name listed as plaintiff on NC Court of Appeals case.

⁹ Another article says GCRG first filed a complaint in November 1999, but this was likely an appeal.

GCRG also sought definitive, longer-term decisions from the court to prevent the landfill at the Bridgers Tract. The group referred to the North Carolina General Statute § 153A-136C¹⁰ and alleged that the Board of Commissioners did not properly consider alternative sites or provide socioeconomic and demographic data.¹¹ They also claimed Commissioners violated due process and the NC Constitution.¹² Specifically, the plaintiffs alleged that the Board did not provide sufficient notice for the public hearing, allow enough space for the meeting, and, in refusing to hold a public referendum, disregarded the will of the majority ("Greene County battles judge's order blocking proposed landfill," 1998; "Group secures restraining order opposing landfill," 1998). Catherine Cralle, a lawyer for GCRG was quoted as saying, "It's the first landfill permit that indisputably falls under this statute. It [will be] the first time there has been any guidance as to what this statute actually means" ("N.C. Environmental Justice Case Expected to Clarify Landfill Law," 2001).

Judge W. Russell Duke Jr. of the Superior Court denied the group's request for an injunction¹³ and ruled in favor of the commissioners and AEI in June 1999, saying, "The plaintiffs have not shown that the commissioners have acted in wanton disregard for the public good" ("Citizen's group loses in latest effort to halt landfill," 1998). AEI was allowed

"By the time our case advanced to the Court of Appeals in Raleigh, we rented a bus. We packed the bus with black and white. We went up to the court of appeals. We fully occupied the courtroom, the windowsills around the side, all the standing room, so when the justices came in, the chairman looked around and smiled, [saying], 'I've never seen so many people in this courtroom before.'"

-Community Member

to move forward with its plans for the landfill at the Bridgers Tract, but GCRG appealed the decision in the Court of Appeals ("Citizen's group loses in latest effort to halt landfill," 1998; "Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners," 2001).

On July 5, 2001, a three judge panel in the NC Court of Appeals reversed the previous trial court decision, sending the case back to the lower court. In his opinion, Judge Walker wrote that the record did not indicate commissioners had given "careful and thorough consideration to alternative sites," as the statute required ("Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners," 2001). Regarding the

¹⁰ The statute requires that: "The board of commissioners of a county shall consider alternative sites and socioeconomic and demographic data and shall hold a public hearing prior to selecting or approving a site for a new sanitary landfill that receives residential solid waste that is located within one mile of an existing sanitary landfill within the State ("Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth, Inc. v. Greene County Board of Commissioners," 2001)."

¹¹ This statute became law in 1999, the year after Greene County citizens first took legal action on the landfill issue.

¹² No information about the specific aspect of the Constitution at issue is cited in articles.

¹³ An injunction would have prevented AEI from making any further progress on the landfill until the case went to trial.

court's decision, GCRG's lawyer said, "It remains to be seen what will happen when we go back to court, but we consider this a victory" ("North Carolina court agrees county short shrifted landfill siting criteria," 2001). The Conservation Council of North Carolina, Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, and the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network, three nonprofit organizations working to address environmental and social justice issues, had filed an amicus brief in support of the GCRG's position (Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, 2001).¹⁴

The following year, the Bridgers Tract landfill issue was in the spotlight again when the North Carolina Press Association claimed that the Greene County Board of Commissioners had violated a state open meeting law (Chamberlain, 2002; "Greene County discussions questioned," 2002). The Commissioners had held a Board meeting and met in small groups with representatives from Republic Services of North Carolina (RSNC), formerly AEI.¹⁵ Commissioners said the purpose of the talks was to resolve the legal dispute surrounding the landfill. These meetings took place without notification in the local weekly paper, *The Standard Laconic*, though the open meeting law requires that newspapers and other media be informed of such meetings at least 48 hours before they are held. Commissioner Gardner defended the practice, saying, "There are some things you can discuss more openly and without interruption in meetings such as these" ("Greene County discussions questioned," 2002).

On March 4, 2002, shortly after the disputed meetings were held, the Board announced that it planned to re-start the landfill site selection process (Chamberlain, 2002; "Greene County discussions questioned," 2002). One Commissioner said, "This resolution that came out of these meetings, if it's approved, will give everybody in this County an opportunity to express themselves on any and every site that is considered" (Chamberlain, 2002).

When the process started over, RSNC conducted an "initial site search," and after considering 20 sites, developed a short list of three possible landfill sites in Greene County. The short list included the Bridgers Tract, which RSNC still owned, as well as two other sites (Wall, 2002c). The Whitchard site was located near the Wayne and Wilson county lines and the Herring site was near the Bridgers Tract.

¹⁴ This was not mentioned in relation to earlier court decisions and articles do not state exactly when they began formally supporting the GCRG's efforts.

¹⁵ In July 2000, the county's agreement with AEI was altered to reflect the company's reorganization from Addington Environmental, Inc. to Republic Services of North Carolina, LLC (RSNC) (North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Division of Waste Management, n.d.).

At two public meetings held in September 2002 to present the site selection process, community members alleged that the process was fixed to result in the selection of the Bridgers Tract once again (Wall, 2002c). In response to questions raised at this meeting about the socioeconomic composition of the surrounding communities and the potential for traffic concerns related to waste delivery trucks, the Commissioners delayed a hearing several weeks

"Well, the people turned out well. That was part of our organization. We had things set up so that we could get the word out to folks. My oldest brother . . . he didn't even know what a county commissioner was . . . but people like him came. I told him that their role was to darken that door up at the county commissioners' anytime that we asked them to. And they did."

-Community Member

to allow RSNC time to gather sufficient data to respond. In November 2002, RSNC submitted socioeconomic and demographic data for all three sites on the short list (Wall, 2002a). While state law required the company to present such information for the Bridgers Tract since it was within one mile of an existing landfill, RSNC chose to provide the same information for the other two sites as well, for the sake of comparison (Wall, 2002a). The County Manager also prepared a list of questions on behalf of the Commissioners and sent it to RSNC for responses.

The Greene County Board of Commissioners voted on the new landfill sites on February 3, 2003. The Board had the option of: 1) selecting one of the three sites for the landfill, or 2) not selecting any of the sites. In a 3-1 vote, the Board opted not to select any of the three proposed landfill sites.

"I think the letters [to the editor] helped us in making changes to the Board of County Commissioners. . . . We put a lot of pressure . . . on individual commissioners who we knew personally, through letters, phone calls, media reports, you name it. We were successful in getting a few minds changed.

-Community Member

Members of GCRG noted that placing political pressure on county commissioners was a key strategy, along with their ability to mobilize much of the community against the proposed landfill. The Board of Commissioners' composition had changed since the initial Bridgers Tract approval in 1998, in part due to success in electing commissioners who expressed support for GCRG

(Mary Betty Kearney and James T. Shackelford) and pressuring other Commissioners into voting against the landfill. Commissioner Denny Garner voted in favor of the landfill because he had campaigned as a proponent in two previous elections and felt the landfill would provide a valuable source of revenue. Commissioners Mary Betty Kearney and James Fulgham voted against the three proposed landfill sites, although Fulgham had supported the idea of the landfill in his earlier election campaign. Fulgham explained his vote by

saying he had decided he wouldn't want his own children living next to a landfill, and that his children were "no better than anybody else's in the county." (Harne, 2003) One community member, Larry Pate, said, however, that Commissioner Fulgham had capitulated to the pressure of a "vocal minority" (Harne, 2003).

Commissioner Bennie Heath, a landfill supporter, said he decided to cast the deciding vote against the landfill to prevent a tie and bring resolution to the longstanding controversy (Harne, 2003; Wall, 2003c). James Shackelford, the fifth Commissioner and a landfill opponent, was not present for the vote, and media reported that his absence impacted Heath's decision to vote against the landfill because a tie vote would have required a re-vote that would have eventually ruled against the landfill (Harne, 2003; Wall, 2003c).

"Putting pressure on your elected officials is crucial. At the outset, and almost all the way through the process, our commissioners would never answer a question. . . . We kept after them. . . . You don't let them sit up there; you make it very uncomfortable for them."

-Community Member

Research

While community members' primary concern seemed to be the site selection process, some research did attempt to examine whether the landfill sites themselves presented environmental justice concerns. Republic Services of North Carolina (RSNC) hired a management consulting firm, B&C Associates, which produced an assessment report on demographic and socioeconomic makeup in December 2000. The goal of the report was to "quantify compliance with EJ criteria at the new landfill site in Greene County at Castoria" (B&C Associates, 2000). The document assessed the area surrounding the Bridgers Tract and four alternative sites using 1990 Census data. The report referred to criteria established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and assessed the existence of a predominantly minority population (if over 50% of population is nonwhite) and a low-income population (defined as twice the state's poverty level) in determining potential environmental injustices. The firm concluded that the Bridgers Tract landfill location would not present environmental injustices regarding race or income (ibid).

Dr. Sue Wilson-Yates, a consultant hired by B&C Associates to conduct an additional assessment, referred to the same environmental justice criteria on race and income to assess the three sites considered for the landfill in 2002-2003 and described her findings in a July 2002 report.¹⁶ Dr. Wilson-Yates used more current data, including 2000 Census data and 2002 estimates, as well as Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and Applied

¹⁶ Additional information about this report was not located.

Geographical Services (AGS) mapping procedures, to compare Black populations and income in areas surrounding the sites. She concluded that, with the exception of income within one mile of the Whitcard site, the data did not present environmental justice concerns for any of the sites, as defined by the EPA (Wilson-Yates, 2002).

Following the 2000 B&C Associates report, researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and East Carolina University wrote a letter critiquing the methodology and conceptualization of the report (Wing, Edwards, & Norton, 2002b). The letter pointed out that B&C Associates misrepresented the unit of analysis, did not adequately explain their GIS methods, used invalid statistical measures, and failed to point out other considerations listed by the EPA.

The University researchers wrote a second letter with similar critiques after the release of Wilson-Yates' study in 2002 (Wing, Edwards, & Norton, 2002a). In this letter, they referenced many of the same concerns, including methodological flaws and misleading statements about data. Additionally, the letter notes that 62% of the population in the census block containing the Bridgers Tract, the people most likely to be directly impacted by the landfill siting, are Black.

"Follow your gut instinct and talk to as many people as you can. Don't take no for an answer. There is always a way out of a problem, but be prepared for the amount of emotional, financial, and physical time you may have to put towards solving a problem. I don't think any of us realized that we would be involved in this thing for so many years. Really, it's a testament to the will of our community and surrounding communities that didn't want this thing here in our neck of the woods. Much can be done with much effort and commitment."

-Community Member

Current Status/Updates

After the County Commissioner's vote to reject all three proposed landfill sites, the proposal for a new landfill was portrayed as a dead issue in media reports (Harne, 2003; Wall, 2003a, 2003b). When the Greene County Board of Commissioners sent an official letter to RSNC reporting that none of three sites would be approved, they also emphasized that the Board would not consider any additional alternative landfill sites and claimed the company had "no legal recourse" despite the 1998 contract (Harne, 2003). Commissioner Heath was quoted, saying, "This chapter in Greene County is over (Harne, 2003)." Members of GCRG and those in opposition to the landfill expressed satisfaction with the outcome, noting that the process of fighting the landfill was an arduous task but was worth their time and effort. Many residents also indicated that they were proud of the partnerships built among community members and groups, stressing that their success in

fighting the landfill would not only benefit themselves, but rather that it represented a success for the entire community and future generations.

Acronyms

AEI	Addington Environmental, Inc.
RSNC	Republic Services of North Carolina (new name for AEI)
AGS	Applied Geographical Services Mapping
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
GCRG	Greene Citizens for Responsible Growth
GIS	Geographical Information Systems

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