



# THE MONROE JOURNAL

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## News

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### Committee approves landfill

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Despite objections of its chairman, the committee formed to research the proposed landfill near Repton decided Thursday to recommend the Conecuh County Commission approve the plan.

Citizens Advisory Committee on Solid Waste Chairman Don Smith said the committee was not supposed to make a recommendation.

Smith first presented a report that did not contain a recommendation, but was an overview of the meetings the group has held.

"This is a draft of the report I would like to submit to the commissioners," Smith said. "We need to look over this and make changes so it can be passed on."

As Smith presented the report to the committee, committee member Marc McIntyre said he had his own report that he wanted the committee to review and approve.

"This is a summary of everything we've done and I think it covers everything," McIntyre said. "We've been working for six months and I want to finish this meeting with a final report."

Smith then asked that the committee review one item at a time, and McIntyre told him he was "not going to bulldoze this meeting."

The committee passed Smith's report and moved on to McIntyre's.

Committee member Daryl Harper, who also serves as the Conecuh County economic development director, said McIntyre's recommendation is "at the heart of the issue" but questioned whether the committee was formed to report the facts or to make a recommendation.

"We've debated whether the commission wants us to give them the facts to make a decision or if they want us to make a decision," Harper said. "I'm willing to voice my opinion if that's what the rest of the committee wants to do."

As the discussion went around the table, committee member Winston Foshee, who is the county engineer, said the report is correct and members of the committee needed to use their own judgment to decide how to vote.

"How you vote is saying you are either for or against the landfill," Foshee said. "This committee was created to find facts – who else was going to do it?"

Smith said he has discussed the purpose of the committee with commissioners and they have said they want a report on the facts, not a recommendation.

Committee member Larry Ryland said Commissioner Wendell Byrd asked Smith when the committee would have a recommendation at the commission's meeting last Monday.

According to Smith and several others in attendance at the commission meeting, Byrd asked for a report, not a recommendation.

In the end, McIntyre, Ryland, Foshee, Harper and Odessa Wallace voted to pass the recommendation on to the commission. Smith abstained from voting.

"This document was not a result of fact finding by the committee, but was a vehicle to express the wishes of Conecuh Woods," Citizens for a Clean Southwest Alabama (CCSA), the group opposed to the landfill, Chairman Johnny Andrews said. "That the committee produced it against the clear wishes of their commissioners indicates strong bias and partisanship."

After the meeting, questions about whether the committee was truly evenhanded still swirled.

Last week, the group CCSA presented a packet to the commissioners claiming the committee was biased and tried to "sell" the merits of the landfill to their members at a recent meeting.

McIntyre is a real estate developer in Evergreen and Conecuh Woods, the company behind the landfill project, rents office space in one of McIntyre's buildings. There were also rumors that McIntyre is a silent partner in Conecuh Woods, but representatives from the company quickly quashed those statements.

"Conecuh Woods now does rent office space in a building owned by Marc McIntyre, a fact that was made public when the company opened their office at 123 McIntyre St. – one of the very few buildings in town that offer ready to go office suites. Renting an office, renting a home and doing business with many local businesses are examples of the positive impact on the local economy of the Conecuh Woods project even

