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Residents watch landfill developments

Local group concerned about effect on environment

By **MONICA PRYTS**

Allied News Staff Writer

A local group that advocates for environmental protection is keeping a close eye on developments surrounding a landfill proposal in Liberty and Pine townships. "I'm just interested in a

clean environment for our kids and grandkids," said Beverly Graham.

Graham is the secretary for the Citizens' Environmental Association of the Slippery Rock Area, also known as CEASRA.

She was joined recently by fellow members Jane Cleary and Bill Sampsell to discuss the group's concerns about Tri-County Industries Inc.'s plans to reopen its landfill on the company's property that spans the two townships.

"It's kind of sneaky the way it's happening," Sampsell said.

The trio met at Cleary's Pine Township home, her dining room table covered in paperwork documenting the group's research over the years. Sampsell and Graham live in Liberty Township.

Vogel Holding Inc. owns the Tri-County property, and the company has filed a permit application with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to reopen its landfill. The application is still

under review by the DEP.

TCI also wants to increase the maximum daily volume of waste that may be received at its transfer station to from 800 to 1,200 tons.

Sampsell was not happy to learn that TCI wants to truck in so much more extra waste. "I'm just repulsed," he said.

TCI has tried to reopen the landfill several times, Graham said, noting that CEASRA continues to have the same concerns about how the project could impact the area - dust,

traffic, noise, odor and other issues.

The group, founded in 1987, opposes the landfill expansion because Cleary is concerned that it could threaten ground water sources.

"It's a bad place for a landfill because of the high water table," Cleary said.

A map of the area shows that the landfill would be located within two miles or less of places like Grove City Memo-

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rial Park, the outlet mall, soccer fields, and several school buildings, according to CEASRA's calculations.

TCI's current application is very similar to the previous one with one big difference – the proposed height, Cleary said.

The company previously filed a request for a 40-foot landfill, which is noted in the current application, but this time it wants to go higher – at least 160 feet – which would require permission from the two townships, she said.

In response to concerns raised by local elected officials and CEASRA members, Edward Vogel, vice president of Vogel Holding Inc., TCI's parent company, has previously said that his company conducted studies that show property values would not be impacted by a landfill, and that groundwater would not be contaminated.

Landfill guidelines set by the state DEP exceed the federal guidelines, he has said, adding that he is willing to give tours of Vogel properties; that in-

cludes the Seneca Landfill in Jackson Township, Butler County.

Vogel has said that the TCI landfill would operate the same as the Seneca site, though it's not "piles of trash" like some folks are picturing, he said. Regulations mandate that the waste has to be covered, and the company must use approved materials such as sand and soil.

Cleary believes that the majority of Pine and Liberty residents are against the landfill.

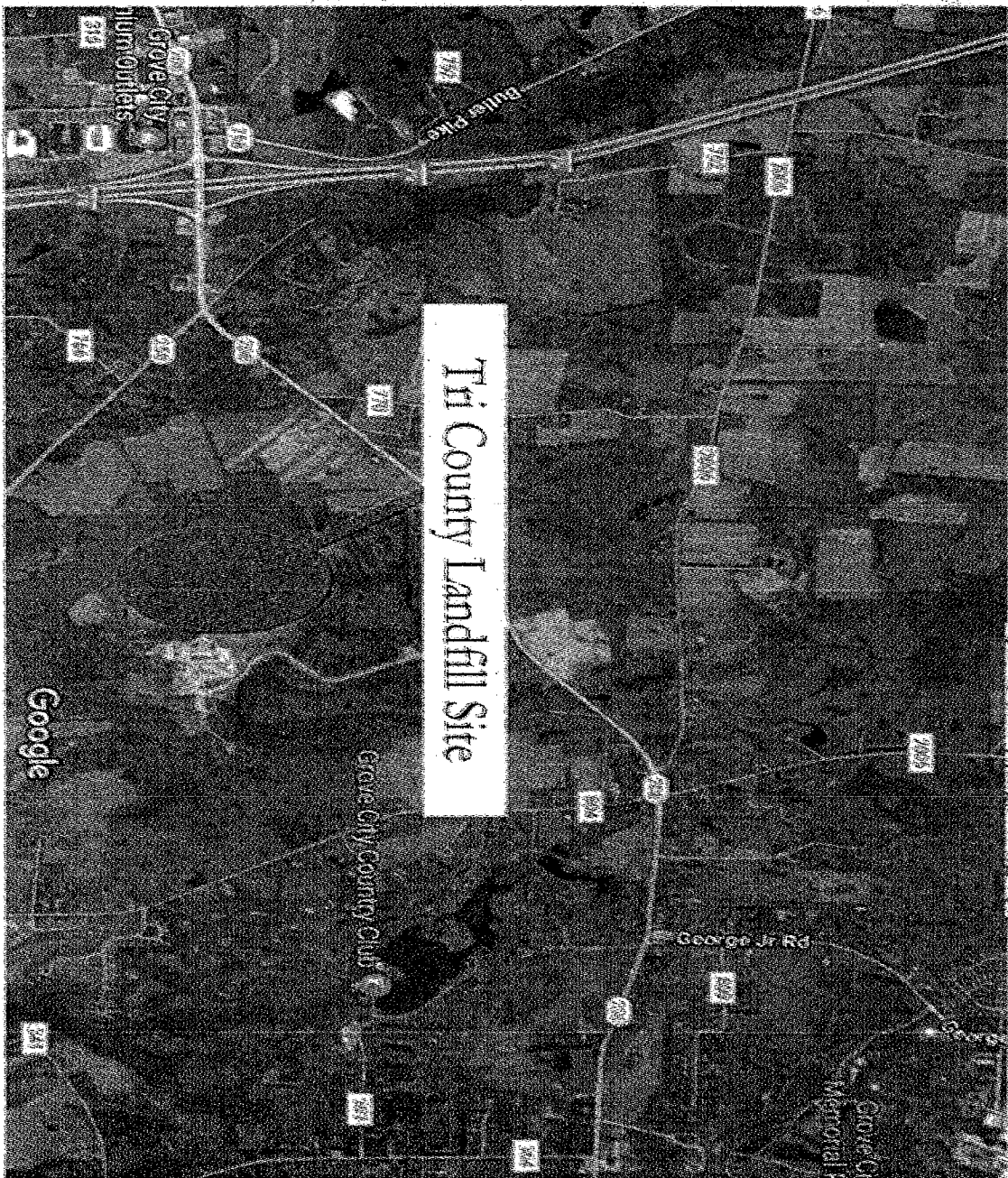
"They don't want their property values going down," Cleary said of another concern.

TCI officials have offered tours of the property, but CEASRA members think they wouldn't be able to see everything they want to see.

Vogel Holding's permit application notes that the previous landfill request was denied in part because of violations at some of those sites.

Cleary said that CEASRA aims to keep educating the public about the integrity of the environment, and members can speak to groups or host programs about topics like safe drinking water.

The DEP expects to schedule a public hearing to collect feedback on TCI's permit application.



This map put together by the Citizens' Environmental Association of the Slippery Rock Area shows the proposed location for the Tri-County Industries Inc. landfill in Pine and Liberty townships.

Contributed

