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July 10, 2024

Domenico Tuzzato, EIT – Bureau of Waste Management
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Environmental Protection
909 Elmerton Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17110

Re: Pioneer Crossing Major Permit Modification
For PADEP Solid Waste Permit 100346
Related to the Proposed Expansion of the
Pioneer Crossing Landfill

Dear Mr. Tuzzato,

The Berks County Planning Commission has received the Application for the above-mentioned Permit Modification named the “Northern Expansion” for the Pioneer Crossing Landfill (PCL). This PADEP Major Permit Modification proposes to expand the disposal area an additional 41.15 acres to the north and west of the existing disposal area. The application indicates that this will provide the facility with 29.5 years of capacity (Cells 8-14). The new proposed PCL property boundary would encompass 376.9-acres, with a 288.3-acre permit boundary, when incorporating this expansion.

The Planning Commission offers the following comments.

1. Form D Section K.1 indicates that the current Berks County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2013. The current Berks County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in January of 2020.
2. Form D Section K 3 indicates that the Exeter Township Zoning Ordinance was last updated in 2013. Our records indicate that the Exeter Township Zoning Ordinance was last updated in 2019.
3. The proposed expansion as well as the entire disposal area of the PCL is located within the Existing Developed Area according to the Future Land Use Section of the Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030 Update.
4. The Landfill and proposed expansion site are located within the Light Industrial (LI) zoning district, which does not allow sanitary landfills as a permitted use. The existing landfill is considered a nonconforming use, and its expansion is governed by the terms

of the Exeter Township Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance prohibits expansion of nonconforming uses by more than 50% of the original area, as of November 11, 1996. It appears the proposed project constitutes an expansion of more than 400% of the nonconforming use as it stood in 1996.

5. There is currently a Host Agreement between Exeter Township and the Pioneer Crossing Landfill that was last amended in 2019.
6. The Berks County Comprehensive Plan provides “The solid waste disposal facilities within Berks County have more than enough capacity to serve the County for the life of this plan. Due to this fact, no further expansion of landfill facilities is needed. We would encourage municipalities to implement joint zoning ordinances limiting the expansion of landfill facilities.” (Ch 10 Community Facilities).
7. Lastly, the Berks County Solid Waste Authority is the primary agency charged with solid waste planning within Berks County. Please refer to the Berks County Municipal Solid Waste Management Plan Revision Draft dated May 23, 2024.

Very Truly Yours,

Christopher Spohn, Chairman
BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION