

Transfer site subject of Bolingbrook meeting

By Don Grigas

Staff writer

Woodridge officials say they will wait to see what happens at a Monday, Sept. 26, meeting between Woodridge residents and Bolingbrook village staff before plotting a course of action over a controversial landscape transfer site on Murphy Road in Bolingbrook.

The meeting, which will take place at 6 p.m. in the board room of Bolingbrook Village Hall, 375 W. Briarcliff Road, was called after more than 50 Woodridge residents attended recent Bolingbrook Village Board and Plan Commission meetings to protest the operations of E.C. Rizzi & Associates Inc., 499 Murphy Road.

According to Jim Boan, Bolingbrook village attorney, notifications of the meeting went out to more than 50 Woodridge residents who contacted the village over the last two weeks.

The business in question is near the intersection of Murphy Road and Woodward Avenue in Bolingbrook on a 17-acre site owned by the Steve Tameling Estate. The property is east of the North-South Tollway, adjacent to the corporate limits of Woodridge.

Residential subdivisions are located east and north of the site, which is used to recycle and re-sell landscape and construction materials such as top soil, wood, glass and rocks.

Some neighboring Woodridge residents have complained about odors emanating from the site, and are concerned a lack of fencing makes the site accessible to children, and that property values might not appreciate if the business continues to operate under current conditions.

Some of the business's operations are no longer in compliance with village code but are grandfathered in because the business was in operation prior to code amendments made in 1995.

At a Sept. 15 Woodridge Village Board meeting, Mayor William Murphy said the village "will take whatever action we need to take" to protect area residents.

The mayor said Woodridge would not rule out the possibility of filing a lawsuit to get the business and property owner to alter its operations, although Murphy said he is "optimistic" the upcoming meeting will result in Bolingbrook getting the business owner to make changes to satisfy residents.

"The best scenario would be that the business verify that it operates in compliance with all Illinois Environmental Protection Agency requirements (because) that would give us a level of comfort," Murphy said.

Residents and Woodridge officials also would prefer Bolingbrook not grant any variances sought

at the Sept. 7 Bolingbrook Plan Commission meeting.

"I would hope Bolingbrook reviews the issue and not provide any variances, and take our residents' concerns seriously," Murphy said.

Murphy lives about four-tenths of a mile from the site in a neighboring subdivision.

The Bolingbrook Village Board is expected to review the issue at its regular meeting Tuesday, Sept. 27, although Boan said the item likely will be remanded to the Plan Commission for further review.

The Taming property is zoned I-1 Limited Industrial, and was annexed into Bolingbrook in 1990, five years after the business began operating on the unincorporated site. In 1995 Bolingbrook revised its codes, the business was allowed to legally continue its operation because it was operating prior to the code amendments.

In 1989 Woodridge annexed parcels of land near the site and zoned it for residential use.

Bolingbrook Mayor Roger Claar told Woodridge residents attending the Sept. 13 Village Board meeting, "there are a lot of questions raised, and a lot of questions still unanswered."

During a Sept. 7 Plan Commission meeting the applicant requested eight variances: four related to subdividing the property, which were unopposed, and four related to the business's operation.

The requested variances would allow the business to operate without fencing the perimeter of the business or providing some sort of landscaped or fenced screening to obstruct the view of the materials that are piled up on the site.

The Plan Commission recommended the request by a vote of 6-1. The Village Board could act on the recommendation at its regular Tuesday, Sept. 27, meeting.

One of the questions that may be cleared up at the Sept. 26 meeting is what the business is permitted to do.

Some Woodridge residents and officials say the business is a solid waste transfer site.

J.R. Rizzi, owner of the business, said confusion exists because the business is a landscape transfer station, but the permit it operates under is issued by the Will County Solid Waste Department.

"We are not a solid waste site; we recycle materials so they are not placed into landfills," Rizzi said.

Rizzi confirmed that the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency has cited his business for improper storage of horse manure, which is used in the processing of soil for resale.

"The manure was in the wrong place. It wasn't an issue of manure not being allowed on the site; it was just stored incorrectly," Rizzi said.

The Bolingbrook Village Board meets Sept. 27, at which time the board could vote on granting variances to the business. It also could table the matter and the applicant could withdraw the request, since the business already operates legally under pre-1995 codes.