

Dothan landfill hearing currently recessed

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News reporter | Posted: Monday, June 6, 2016 5:15 pm

Three days of testimony wasn't enough to resolve the appeal of Dothan's landfill permit and planned expansion.

The hearing, convened last week to hear a complaint filed by two Dothan residents who live near the city's landfill, has been recessed pending production of a witness.

Residents Bobby Lewis and Michael Del Vecchio have appealed the Alabama Department of Environmental Management's decision to award a landfill permit to the City of Dothan that allows the city to expand the landfill at its current site in east Dothan.

The residents claim the landfill expansion will preclude them from enjoying the same freedoms Dothan residents enjoy who do not live near the landfill, such as eating meals outside and playing with children in the front yard. They claim the expansion will subject them to depressed property values, offensive odors, loud noises and an increased exposure to disease carriers. They also claim ADEM did not follow its own rules and regulations in awarding the permit.

The City of Dothan claims there is no evidence of actual safety hazards as a result of the issuance of the permit and that any variances from ADEM rules and regulations were investigated and determined not to be a threat to public safety or an unreasonable creation of environmental pollution.

The witness, who works for ADEM, could appear later this week. Attorneys for both sides may be asked to file briefs at the end of the hearing. A hearing officer will then submit a recommendation.