

**From:** [Jason](#)  
**To:** [Benton Public Comment](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Benton County Conditional Use Application 2025-04-29  
**Date:** Tuesday, April 29, 2025 4:45:02 PM

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From Jason Schindler, current Benton County ENRAC chair – 2025-04-29

Dear Planning Commission, Benton County Commissioners, Staff, et al.,

I am writing to reflect on our process and the challenges faced by the Environment & Natural Resources Advisory Committee (ENRAC) in fulfilling our mandate. Our mission, as delegated by the Benton County Commissioners and Planning Commission, was to review and make recommendations regarding the Site Development Map Plan and narrative. We made that review and collectively voted to deny the approval of the CUP, and I urge you to vote similarly.

The mandate to ENRAC has been interpreted in various ways, leading to confusion and overlapping responsibilities. Despite the support from Benton County Staff, the limited expertise and time of our volunteer members have made it difficult to perform our duties effectively, as well as confusion further noted below.

The relationship with VNEQS, a community opposing the landfill expansion, has been strained, with BC staff expressing negative sentiments towards activists and the dissolved SWAC board. This has created a perception of bias and an uneven playing field. This has also lent an air of, undeserved, un-importance and perfunctory nature to this recommendation. Hopefully, this is not the case.

Public meeting laws, recently enforced more strictly, have further complicated our operations. These implementations have disabled direct communication between board members, making collaboration and documentation sharing challenging, and are in fact probably unlikely--or at least could have been enabled with proper support and meeting laws implementation. The sudden enforcement of these regulations has hindered our ability to function effectively.

The expedited nature of our assessment of the CUP, encouraged by BC staff, has devalued our role and rushed the process. The pressure to quickly vote on the CUP, without thoroughly reviewing the extensive documentation, has compromised our ability to provide a comprehensive evaluation.

Despite these challenges, ENRAC has done its best to assess the CUP and provide a detailed recommendation. We greatly appreciate that it be considered, as mandated. We urge the Planning Commission to consider our concerns and ensure a thorough evaluation of the CUP Application, taking into account the environmental perspective we have provided.

Thank you for considering our recommendation.

Jason Schindler