ENG101 English Comprehension

Mid Term Examination – Spring 2005

Time Allowed: 90 Minutes

Please read the following instructions carefully before attempting any of the questions:

1. Attempt all questions. Marks are written adjacent to each question.
2. Mistakes in spelling, punctuation and grammar may be penalized in any part of the paper.
3. Read the given passage carefully before answering Q 1 and 2.
4. Do not ask any questions about the contents of this examination from anyone.
   - ***a.*** If you think that there is something wrong with any of the questions, attempt it to the best of your understanding.
   - ***b.*** If you believe that some essential piece of information is missing, make an appropriate assumption and use it to solve the problem.
   - ***c.*** Write all steps, missing steps may lead to deduction of marks.

****WARNING: Please note that Virtual University takes serious note of unfair means. Anyone found involved in cheating will get an `F` grade in this course.**

PASSAGE

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If you allow the Ruffino Hills trash transfer station project to happen, then you're not being a good neighbor," Elaine Gaskamp, president of the Greater Fondren Southwest Super Neighborhood 36, asserted specifically to the residents of Bellaire. "Our friends in Bellaire and elsewhere can help us prevent this disaster from happening."

Gaskamp, in league with attorney and City Council District C hopeful Brian P. Cweren, is on a mission to keep her Fondren-area community safe and healthy, to prevent a trash transfer station from being built on the perimeter of their neighborhood. The proposed site is at 9720 Ruffino Hills Road, near the intersection of Beltway 8 and West Bellfort. In years past, this locale was home to a landfill-turned-public golf course. The mass of garbage that will be the transfer station will be located a mere 500 feet from a preschool, and a few hundred feet more from Super Neighborhood 36 homes. "It's outrageous and unacceptable!" Cweren denounced.

A trash transfer station, according to land development code, "is a facility or site at which the exchange or deposit of trash is made for ultimate transfer elsewhere." In other words, it is a temporary holding pen for waste destined for landfills. "It will be a mountain of threatening garbage," Gaskamp noted, "that will be taller than the homes in our neighborhood. The horrific smell of trash and decomposition will flood our streets and harm our children."

In general, most trash transfer stations accept the following rubbish and/or recyclables: metal and aluminum cans, glass bottles and jars, aluminum products, plastic bottles, mixed paper products, yard trimmings, appliances and other scrap metal (though no vehicles), building materials, textiles, computers and related electronics, tires, motor oil, antifreeze, food waste, furniture, Styrofoam© and similar products, soil, rocks, tree trunks, stumps and anything else that

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people might throw out, including items that are prohibited by law to be recycled, such as batteries and various paint products.

Additionally, the waste trucks used to drop off and pick up the garbage spew high concentrations of diesel fumes into the surrounding area, adding additional health risks to residents, never mind the noise pollution these trucks cause.

"Our problem," Gaskamp explained, "is that this trash transfer station would be located near thousands of residential homes and many schools. It'll give off foul odors, attract rodents and other pests, bring cancer-causing diesel fumes, give off a vent of methane gases, threaten groundwater contamination caused by runoff into nearby residential properties, create traffic hazards from the trucks and lower the local property value."

Cweren maintained that "for many residents of Super Neighborhood 36, their homes are their only assets – it's all they have. We need to protect their investments and not cause unwarranted harm."

The prospective site for the garbage depot is a 150-acre tract of land, jointly owned by the City of Bellaire and the City of West University Place. Recently, Bellaire leased its 14-acre portion to Ruffino Hills LP, the company that plans to build the trash transfer station. "The original lease," Gaskamp explained, "was signed almost 30 years ago, and has two, 10-year extensions. The lease is up in October, though the City of Bellaire can file for the extension."

The extension will give opponents of the project a chance to get the project permit revoked. "There have been major developments in the area since the original permit was awarded 24 years ago. A lot has changed," Gaskamp noted. "We're advocating for new legislation that will put reasonable limits on these sorts of permits." Also, Gaskamp said that neither party consulted the neighborhood citizens before the

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original contract was negotiated. "It's time to do the right thing," Gaskamp challenged the entire Houston-area community.

It is the task of the president of a Super Neighborhood to take action in these types of matters. The goal in creating the Super Neighborhood system by Mayor Lee Brown in 2000 was to promote a neighborhood-oriented local government. Since President Gaskamp learned of the trash transfer station project in September 2002, she has gone to work by arranging monthly town hall meetings, inviting local media coverage, organizing protest marches and appearing at city council meetings in Houston, Bellaire and West University. She pilots the Coalition Against Ruffino Trash Transfer Station organization (CARTTS); her goal is to stop the transfer station from being built, find out if the site is environmentally safe and then develop an alternative use of the land.

There is a workable solution to this predicament, Cweren and Gaskamp agree. It is possible to prevent Ruffino Hills LP from receiving its building permit and final environmental permit. Its lease of the acres with the City of Bellaire expires this October. "This is the big deadline," Cweren said.

"Bellaire has the option to extend the lease to Ruffino Hills LP," Gaskamp noted. "If we can hold them at bay until October, we will keep this atrocity out of our neighborhood." Gaskamp and Cweren commit to fighting the project with political pressure and community outrage. It is going to take a massive group effort," they agreed.

The City Council of Bellaire represents its citizens: "If the people of Bellaire knew that they were about to dump on their neighbors in Southwest Houston – literally – they might be compelled to do something about it!" Gaskamp exclaimed. "The environmental hazards are too great a risk just to make a few extra dollars off of this project. They can pressure their government to take action against the station."

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90"There are many things the average person can do to help," Cweren stated: "You can call or e-mail your local and state government officials. Additionally, there are monthly meetings [at 7 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month]. And, there are petitions being sent out to stop the project from happening. Currently, there are more than [95]1,200 signatures. But we need a lot more," he continued.

Gaskamp added that "we need to spread the word that this is not a done deal; we need more volunteers to join our phone committee to help gather more support, or use any other talents or professional tools towards our efforts. We need to get creative!"

Total Marks: 30 **Total Questions: 08**

Question No. 1 **Marks : 03**

Q 1. (i) According to Cweren what is outrageous?

Question No. 2 **Marks : 04**

Q 1. (ii) What are some of the dangers associated with trash transfer station near a residential area?

Question No. 3 **Marks : 04**

Q 1. (iii) Write about location and area of the prospective trash transfer station.

Question No. 4 **Marks : 04**

Q 1. (iv) What is the solution to the predicament?

Question No. 5 **Marks : 03**

Q 1. (v) According to Cweren what can an average person do?

Question No. 6 **Marks : 02**

Q 1. (vi) Give a suitable title to the news article.

Question No. 7 **Marks : 06**

Q 2. In the passage what do the following words refer to. An example is provided.
Elaine Gaskamp [line 2] = president of the Greater Fondren Southwest Super neighbourhood

i. **Brian P. Cweren [line 7]**
ii. **it [18]**

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iii. CARTTS [70]
iv. its [75]
v. their[84]
vi. you [91]

Question No. 8 **Marks : 04**

Q 3. Read the following sentences and decide on the best verb form to complete the sentence.

a. I (**walked, am walk, am to walk**) to work this morning.
b. The path (**is being, will to be, was**) very smooth.
c. I (**will be to close, will to close, will close**) the door.
d. My son (**is walking, was walked, has walk**) with me.

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