

## **Power Plant Expansion**

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### **Business Challenge/Environment**

*Our client proposed major expansion of a coal-fired and waste-to-energy power plant in a residential neighborhood. The expanded facility would burn more waste, including tires, and upgrade technology to comply with emissions regulations. The expansion required an annexation, rezoning two parcels and a special use permit — all requiring votes by the planning board and city council. Some of the direct abutters had filed and settled a lawsuit alleging nuisance violations. Vigorous neighborhood opposition at the first public hearing resulted in the planning board refusing to issue any recommendation.*

### **Outcome**

When the proposals for annexation, rezoning and a special use permit went before the city council, we secured a unanimous, 5-0, vote in favor of the project.

### **Our Approach**

We were engaged after the initial public hearing at which opponents overwhelmed our client. We quickly prepared a field program to identify supporters and potential advocates to secure approval of the voluntary annexation, rezoning and special use permit by the city council.

During a 90-day period, we:

- Conducted a door-to-door campaign to speak with abutting and nearby residents to understand their concerns and to identify potential supporters.
- Distributed two community newsletters updating neighbors about the facility and plans for the upgrades.
- Generated a letter-writing campaign to the city council members.
- Organized personal tours of the plant for each council member.
- Identified and enlisted community power brokers to be spokespersons for the facility upgrades at public hearings.
- Coordinated land use attorneys, traffic engineers and noise experts to provide supportive expert reports and testimony at the public hearings.
- Mobilized supporter turnout and scripted speakers for the public hearings, where we outnumbered the opposition, 4-to-1.

CASE STUDY