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New Hill residents protested Tuesday evening outside of Apex town hall prior to the board of commissioners meeting.

Board nixes chance to help New Hill residents

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Editor
September 09, 2005

Apex officials have been doing a good job sidestepping the New Hill issue over the past three months, eagerly pointing to Cary as the leader of the pack.

That routine didn't hold up very well Tuesday night when they were confronted by one of their own.

Commissioner Bill Jensen presented a resolution that requested the town evaluate additional sites for a regional sewage plant.

But the remaining three commissioners – Mike Jones, Gene Schulze and Bryan Gossage – sat in silence when Jensen requested that one of them second his proposal.

“Their silence spoke volumes,” said Jensen.

The Western Wake Partners, which includes Apex, Cary, Holly Springs and Morrisville, intend to build the plant in the heart of neighboring New Hill. Cary already owns the proposed site after condemning a 221-acre farm near old U.S. 1.

Jensen and New Hill residents believe the partners should study alternative sites that would have less of an impact on the community.

“This board has been silent on the issue,” said Jensen.
“We keep pointing to Cary. Well, we are part of it, too.”

In his resolution, Jensen pointed out several factors that he believed made other alternative sites more attractive.

He noted that New Hill will probably be annexed by the town years from now and future Apex boards will question their decision on the location of the sewage plant. The current site is located at the intersection of two major roads, which could eventually turn into prime commercial property.

The site also sits near two churches and several homes in the historic district of the community.

“This is our future tax base,” said Jensen. “Future boards will look back and wonder what we were thinking.”

Both Jones and Schulze gave reasons for not supporting the resolution while Gossage did not.

Claiming to agree with most of Jensen’s ideas, Jones and Schulze said passing a resolution could be detrimental to the partnership with Cary.

“We all agreed with the process and it’s important that we abide by that process,” said Schulze.

Schulze also said he would continue to evaluate alternative sites.

Mayor Keith Weatherly said the matter had already moved to the state level and it was up to the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources to make a decision.

“The response of the commissioners was so orchestrated I could hear the music playing,” said Jensen.

Several New Hill residents spoke to the board during the public forum portion of the meeting.

Tonya Forbes said she lived in Apex 15 years and still owns lands in town.

“I was always proud to say I lived here,” said Forbes.
“Now, I’m not so proud. The actions of Apex are beginning to mimic those of Cary.”

David Bristol criticized the courage of the board, stating Apex needs to tell their partner Cary what they are doing is wrong.

“I love my wife but if she was going the wrong way I would tell her,” said Bristol. “You don’t have the courage to tell Cary they are going the wrong way.

“You are putting (the sewage plant) in the center of our

town and that's wrong."