

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Is Cary making Apex's decisions?

I drove through our neighboring town of New Hill this morning, and was reminded of its sleepy innocence as I travelled around each country bend. However, marring its peacefulness were the many "Stop Cary" and "Don't Dump on Us" signs posted in residents' yards.

As a resident of Apex (with a suddenly-embarrassing "Apex" license plate mounted on the front of my car), I felt a sense of responsibility for the social upheaval going on in New Hill. Apex, one of four towns deeming ourselves the "Western Wake Partners," is planning to build and use a wastewater treatment plant in the middle of New Hill. New Hill won't be able to use the facility, and firmly opposes its imposition.

We all know that New Hill doesn't have the population or resources to put up much of a fight.

What bothers me, and many others, about the New Hill action is the failure of the four towns to work with New Hill to identify alternative sites, to fairly compensate them for their injury, or to accept public responsibility for their participation. Cary claims that as the leader of the four towns (since it has the most experience in the administrative processes of involuntary land-taking), its responsibility is to its partners in the coalition. Apex,

Morrisville, and Holly Springs are quietly standing behind Cary, which has already lost its cultural and political reputation among locals.

It is as if Apex has woken up with an unpalatable bedfellow after a regrettable night of consumption -- do we want to behave as Cary does, with eyes downcast and the excuse of being a powerless follower? Or do we have the power to lead by example and insist that Cary respect human dignity by working with the community of New Hill to forge a deal that compromises with and compensates them?

The residents of New Hill are our friends, our co-workers, our neighbors, and our relatives. Does the "small town" of Apex really accept this treatment of them? What alternatives were considered? What alternatives remain? How much more would they cost? What can Apex as a "partner" do to encourage exploration of additional site options?

If you would like to support the pursuit of a gentler solution, please print this article out, write "Me, too" on the top, and mail it to:

Apex Board of Commissioners, Apex Town Hall, 73 Hunter Street, Apex, NC 27502.

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Apex