

Subject: Reponse to EIS for the New Hill Sewage treatment plant

From: Berry Credle <bcredle0820@yahoo.com>

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Mr. Wicker, and members of the Morrisville, Cary, Apex, and Holly Springs Town Councils,

I re-read the link concerning the comments I made to the Corp of Army Engineers and I read the response. I think further clarification is required on some of these points. I want to also say that I am fully aware that the current leaders of these municipalities are not necessarily the ones who made the decisions which so adversely affect my community of New Hill. It is my hope that upon reconsideration we can enlist support of the new leaders to find a solution which would benefit our community but also the region as a whole (including the townships of the Western Wake Partners).

1) I think the Army Corp of Engineers has to evaluate the site which was given to them by the partners. It is sad that the partners cannot recognize that despite its desire not to build near historic districts or playgrounds, this is exactly what it is doing by choosing site 14 which is the only site in all of New Hill contiguous to 2 churches instead of selecting one of the sites on the Progress Energy lands just a mile up the road. It is particularly pathetic on the part of the partners that some of those sites were made small (in the vast amount of acreage on the Progress Energy site just so that that site would be too small to receive consideration when compared to site 14 (part of this goes into the comments/responses for III.74, III.76)).

2) I'd like address in particular the comments in III.24 through III.33 regarding our drinking water in New Hill.

To point out the obvious: In New Hill we don't need a sewage treatment plant, we use septic systems. We also are not allowed to hook into the system which is being thrust into site 14. But most importantly, historically, Cary has had sewage spills which don't just spill 10,000 gallons but many hundreds of thousands of gallons of raw sewage into the tributaries around that town (in some cases even millions of gallons). Pipes get old no doubt, but when this sewage spills into areas around Cary, they have a drinking water supply which is safe (supplied by the town). If you ship millions of gallons of raw sewage by our homes and a pipe breaks ("when" not "if"), it may contaminate drinking water for months or years. Some of the horses in and around New Hill depend upon ponds for their drinking supply. All of the humans here depend upon wells for their survival. If you destroy these wells are we then forced to (for some extended period of time) to drink, cook, and bathe with bottled water or water shipped in from Cary? Where is the mitigation plan? If a pipe breaks in a remote area and goes unnoticed for days or weeks, how many wells are rendered unusable for extended periods of time?

My point is that there is really only one safe way to get this plan to work. The partners must agree to treat their sewage in their own municipalities then ship the effluent back to the Cape Fear basin. I am not even objecting to having effluent pipes pass by our lots on the way to a central pumping station located on Progress Energy land. From here (if the water is truly treated) it could even be pumped into Harris Lake or at least combined into a single pipe for discharge below the dam at the south end of Jordan Lake. My point is that a leaking effluent pipe may foul our ponds and wells for days or weeks. Raw sewage could basically render our property worthless and cause us to have to seek refuge (at great expense to our families and the preservation of our communities) to some place where we can once again drink water. Then where will the livestock go - what could have been income is now us shipping these animals to a safe location to be cared for with clean water.

3) Permitting for the water coming into New Hill and the power to run this facility was

not done correctly. (III.42)

Honestly, a pipe that large for a few fire engines and a firehouse in New Hill? This was just a guise to say Apex would like to extend some fresh water to New Hill for the fire station. Problem is over the summer nearly 100,000 gallons of water per day spilled into ditches around the fire house. Why? Because to keep the lines from pumping stagnant water you needed to use that much water per day. Obviously the need was in the low 100's of gallons...the extra 100,000 gallons per day - that was well inexcusable. Power from Apex is just as stupid. Last I saw everyone along the New Hill-Holleman road has power from Progress Energy - why does Apex see the need to run additional power lines down to a community which already has power?

Real succinctly: we have power, we have water. If you are running these things to New Hill for the sewage treatment plant it should have been permitted that way not because the fire station needs to be able to fill its entire fleet in under an hour.

4) III.49, III.87 - odor. Please understand that when the residents around South Cary plant complained about odor they did indeed move near an existing sewage treatment plant (that is issue 1). They also used that plan to treat their sewage (that is issue 2).

In New Hill, we lived here before the plant.,
In New Hill, we cannot use the plant - meaning this land was condemned not as a service to the community such as building a road or a school which everyone benefits from but rather a land grab that was convenient for Cary to pull off.

Back to my point. So it smells bad on a particular day after the plant goes into operation. The partners don't care to do anything about this because a) they own none of the surrounding property - so what is the benefit to their constituents who can vote them in our out of office if they use valuable town money to spend trying to appease the New Hill community which thinks the sewage stinks. (I'll answer that - there is no incentive...so it won't be done). If you had this on Progress Energy land, the birds and deer might complain but alas they don't vote either...but they also don't complain to the Corp of Engineers so it might have been (and still would be) a better solution over all.

5) Environmental Justice III.109

I don't believe I just read this - the response is to make sure the community is aware of what is going to happen. Although I applaud these efforts as a start - what about realizing this is illegal to confiscate land and build these projects near minority communities. The reason the law is there is prevent those who are without the means to defend themselves a chance to be protected. It doesn't make it any better really to say, "so long as I tell them I'm going to do something bad to them, then it is ok." This is definitely not what the EJ laws had in mind. I think this was a huge failure on the part of the FEIS.

6) response III.111 so because the census has a larger box which says the population is not so one sided, we have to ignore the fact that the addresses closest to the site have a considerably larger minority population than the partner towns and even the census block? Why should this be ignored? Honestly if the census district were redrawn, it is well known that the numbers would reflect considerably higher minority population than what is represented in the larger census block. I think this was a huge failure on the part of the FEIS.

7) III.142 is laughable. The partners have committed to meeting with the community to discuss concerns during the construction process. They did such a great job with their initial community contact - they were going to condemn the property without ever telling anyone in New Hill what was happening. There is substantial justification in our doubt that the partners would ever engage in a dialog with us. Even in the early days when we expressed our concerns and offered to Susan Moran and some in Cary's Town Council to partner with them - to help them get this moved out of downtown New Hill and onto Progress Energy - the decision had already been made - they were not looking for our input. This is no different. If they do hold a meeting, it will be to tell us "here is what is going to happen" rather than "we seek your input on ways to make this better." This is an insufficient response.

I'm certain there is more, but alas, I didn't have the legal teams which the Partners have to look over the rest of the detail.

FINAL REQUEST:

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My request is that we really consider what this is going to do to a township in Southwestern Wake County which pre-dates and of the partner's townships. I know the Corp of Engineers can only give the thumbs up or thumbs down on a proposal; and sadly the townships involved have not realized that the moral thing to do is to treat their own raw sewage in their townships (so it doesn't foul our wells and ponds) and pump the effluent back in the river so downstream Cape Fears towns (such as Fayetteville) can have the water they require. Instead, it was convenient to pick on a township who has already had Jordan Lake, Shearon Harris, Dixie Pipeline, mutiple power easements thrust upon it. And to beat that - impacting to the greatest extent a minority community, 2 churches, and a historic district when land (already condemned by a public utility) was less than a mile away.

I request that the COE reject this FEIS if for no other reason the Environmental Justice issues.

I pray that the partners might realize there is a better, more moral solution even if it is a little harder. Heck if we didn't have to risk our wells being fouled, you might just find some in New Hill who would help you in this fight...I know I would.

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(the last house in Apex, Wake County before you hit New Hill's postal district)