

June 18, 2006

Daniel M. Blaisdell, P.E.  
Assistant Chief, Engineering Branch  
Construction Grants and Loans Section  
North Carolina Division of Water Quality  
1633 Mil Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1633

Dear Mr. Blaisdell,

I am a native of Cary, North Carolina and a graduate of North Carolina State University. I have called "New Hill" home for the past 25 years (since 1981) and live less than one mile from the proposed sewage treatment plant off of Old US 1 Highway.

Why call New Hill home? Residents are attracted to the New Hill community for its small town, quaint "time gone past" charm, along with its rural scenic and quiet farming environment. I like to refer to it as "*Little bit of heaven in the country*". Even Old US 1 Highway which runs through the heart of New Hill is designated as a national bicyclist route due to New Hill's less traveled route and scenic qualities.

As a person that values history, I am proud that New Hill has the honor of being listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. New Hill represents a by-gone era in Wake County's history with many architecturally significant structures. My residence - a farmhouse is the oldest known house in the New Hill area and dates to around 1814 (192 years ago). My home has family ties to Squire Robert M. Brown who was the first U.S. Postmaster of the New Hill, and a childhood friend of U.S. President Andrew Johnson. The government's record of a post office being established provides the earliest documentation of a developing community. The U.S. federal government established the New Hill Post Office in 1850, which is one of the earliest post offices in southwestern Wake County. The proposed sewage treatment plant would share common boundaries with the New Hill National Register Historic District.

How could this sewage treatment facility proposal be allowed to happen in regards to the New Hill community's heritage?

- 1) Did the town of Cary and Western Wake Partners consider the historical issues of siting the sewage treatment plant adjacent to the boundaries of the New Hill community's historical district? No.
- 2) Did Cary, Western Wake Partners' leader allow New Hill the same respect and courtesy in regards to historical significance as they did with other neighboring historic communities, such as unincorporated Green Level? No.
- 3) Did Cary and Western Wake Partners give consideration to that the National Register of Historic Places designation also strives for protection and preservation of community character? NO, again.

(In respect to question #1) Jennifer Robinson of the Cary Town Council realized that the Western Wake Partners had made a mistake. She writes in an email dated June 26, 2005: ***"First, historical or societal issues were not considered when the site selection process was undertaken. It should have been a factor as important as meeting the standards of the Inter-Basin Transfer."***

N.C. Department of Cultural Resources' Peter Sandbeck in December 2005 wrote: ***"We believe that the proposed facility may adversely affect the New Hill Historic District."*** He continues: ***"To proceed with the condemnation of property that is immediately adjacent to a National Register-listed property prior to completing the environmental studies and Section 106 process seem to us to be ill advised and could result in a waste of public funds as well as time and goodwill."***

(In respect to question #2): In comparative historical background, the historic district of Green Level had its post office established just a few years earlier in the 1840's. Green Level is also listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Both New Hill and Green Level today are unincorporated communities surrounded by rapid growth. But in contrast, Cary did not provide the same courtesy or respect to the New Hill community residents regarding the New Hill Historic District as it did with the Green Level Historic District.

Scott Ramage in the Southwest Wake Planning meeting on January 24, 2006 stated that Cary worked with the Green Level community to help protect its small town historic district for over two years. The Green Level Historic District is now protected, and the surrounding property can be used only for residential or open spaces. Industrial uses are not permitted in and around the Green Level Historic District.

The Town of Cary did not notify anyone in New Hill (other than the targeted condemnation property's owners) that property in the center of New Hill was being considered for a sewage treatment plant. So why did Cary not give New Hill the same consideration that they gave Green Level in regards to their historic districts? Could it be that Green Level is in Cary's jurisdiction while New Hill is not, it is in Apex's jurisdiction.

(In respect to question #3) Historic Preservation as it relates to historic districts and places is a well-established tool to protect community character (*from Wake County's "Growth Management Strategy" Executive Summary*).

State and Federal agency's comments towards the proposed Western Wake Sewage Treatment Plant are: ***"We believe that the proposed facility may adversely affect the New Hill Historic District. There appears to be potential for the introduction of atmospheric elements as light and odor as well as noise from increased traffic and operations. These all will adversely affect the rural character and setting of the historic district."***

N.C. Dept. of Cultural Resources' Peter Sandbeck in December 2005 wrote: ***"We need to provide a strong word of caution to the Division of Water Quality and to the project partners."***

In conclusion, the town of Cary and Western Wake Partners DID NOT consider historical issues of siting the sewage treatment plant in New Hill. They DID NOT treat New Hill the same as it did in regards to protecting other unincorporated communities' historic districts, and they DID NOT consider the environmental effects on the New Hill community's cultural character in regards to its national historical designation. Public officials, such as Cary's Jennifer Robinson admit they failed in recognizing New Hill's historic aspects before voting on the proposed site, but conclude afterwards, historic aspects are as important as environmental factors in selecting the proposed site.

New Hill residents respectfully request DENR to recognize that this proposed sewage treatment site adjacent to the New Hill Historic District is a "raw deal" and not the best site, thus it should be withdrawn from further consideration. Thank you.

Best Regards,

Lynn Gallup

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