

# New Hill Community Association Sues to Stop Partners From Dumping Sewage on New Hill

By Anthony - Posted on September 9th, 2010

Tagged:

- [New Hill](#)
- [Press Release](#)

Durham, NC – On behalf of the [New Hill Community Association \(NHCA\)](#), the Southern Coalition for Social Justice has filed a [Petition for Contested Case Hearing](#) in the state Office of Administrative Hearings to challenge the Western Wake Partners' proposed placement of a sewage treatment plant in the center of the [New Hill community](#).

“We have been willing to host the Partners' sewage treatment plant so long as it was not in the middle of our community, but the Partners won't meet us halfway,” says Rev. James E. Clanton of the First Baptist Church New Hill and a leader and a leader in the NHCA. “It is unfortunate we have to resort to litigation to have our voices heard.”

The Petition contests the issuance of a 401 Water Quality Certification by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Water Quality (DWQ). It highlights deficiencies in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which the 401 Water Quality Certification relied upon heavily. The Petition requests a hearing on these issues and seeks an injunction to prevent site construction until a hearing can be held.

Among the specific concerns documented in the Petition are that:

- Site 14 has larger human and environmental justice impacts than other, more suitable alternatives, including land previously condemned by Progress Energy in the same general vicinity.
- Noise, odor, traffic, and light spill from the sewage treatment plant will impact the New Hill Historic District, including the predominantly African-American First Baptist Church and cemetery.
- Western Wake Partners reverse-engineered Site 14 by prematurely committing nearly \$10 million to the site before considering its human and environmental impacts. This commitment of resources prevented an unbiased consideration of better, alternative sites in the same general vicinity.

“There are better places to put this plant. We understand the Partners' needs for additional sewage capacity. We simply ask that they do not put the burdens of their growth in the middle of our community, next to our churches,” said Elaine Joyner, a congregant at First Baptist Church New Hill.

The filing of the Petition is a turning point in the five year struggle pitting the overwhelmingly African-American residents of New Hill against some of the state's wealthiest municipalities. To pay costs associated with litigation, New Hill recently held a barbecue fundraiser at the First Baptist Church New Hill and raised \$4,648. Additional litigation support came from a \$10,000 grant from the Impact Fund, an organization supporting efforts to achieve economic and social justice.

Rev. Clanton says, "It is David versus Goliath all over again, but we know how that turned out, don't we?"

For more information visit:

[www.southerncoalition.org/newhill](http://www.southerncoalition.org/newhill)

[www.newhillca.org](http://www.newhillca.org)

[www.indyweek.com/indyweek/dumping-on-new-hill/Content?oid=1593974](http://www.indyweek.com/indyweek/dumping-on-new-hill/Content?oid=1593974)

Contact:

Chris Brook, attorney, Southern Coalition for Social Justice

(919) 323-3380; [chris@southerncoalition.org](mailto:chris@southerncoalition.org)

Elaine Joyner, New Hill Community Association

[etjoyner@bellsouth.net](mailto:etjoyner@bellsouth.net)

Rev. James Clanton, First Baptist Church New Hill

(919) 218-4066; [clantonjames@bellsouth.net](mailto:clantonjames@bellsouth.net)