

Wednesday, August 9, 2006 <http://blogs.newsobserver.com/wakepol/>

## New Hill confusion

Can't fathom what makes the community of New Hill the best place for a new sewer plant? You're not alone -- some in the state Division of Water Quality are scratching their heads, too.

A group of state examiners have told the four western Wake County towns building the plant to give a more "detailed" explanation of the process they used to select the site for the planned sewage treatment plant.

Leaders from Apex, Cary, Holly Springs and Morrisville have never fully revealed how they decided to put the plant in the middle of New Hill, a crossroads community next to the Shearon Harris nuclear plant in southwestern Wake County.

Much of the confusion stems from the towns' decision last year to scrap their initial ranking system, which featured a formula that rivaled NCAA football's complex Bowl Championship Series standings. Using that system, the towns ranked the New Hill site fifth-best of 12.

Town leaders have never provided any documentation explaining how they evaluated sites once they abandoned their ranking formula. In interviews, though, they have said money loomed large in their final choice.

Kim Fisher, Cary's public works director, said the towns are now working to "create a better explanation of all that complex procedure so it's easier to understand."

Posted at 12:49 pm by Toby Coleman in Wake Towns, Cary, Apex, Holly Springs, Morrisville  
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**Comment from: Brent [Visitor]** 08/10/06 at 01:20

"Kim Fisher, Cary's public works director, said the towns are now working to "create a better explanation of all that complex procedure so it's easier to understand."

Really? The citizens of New Hill have been asking for such an explanation for many months, and they've been stonewalled by the Wwstern Wake Partners, led by Cary.

Now the state is forcing Cary/WWP to explain its decision.

Should be interesting.

Regardless, something truly stinks about the regional sewage treatment plant.

**Comment from: JohnB [Visitor]** · <http://johnforcary.livejournal.com> 08/10/06 at 10:03

I remember when we initially had discussions of this on CaryPolitics Brent. For the life of me I couldn't understand why they didn't select a site on the Progress Energy tract, aside from the fear that Progress Energy would use the state legislators they own to whip Cary off that idea. It may be that this turns out to be a way to get the plant onto Progress Energy land. Although it's a moot point now, Al Seymour already cashed the check and walked away.

**Comment from: Tonya [Visitor]** 08/10/06 at 11:55

The selection of an appropriate site is a separate issue from the condemnation issue. If DENR does not approve the site, then the WWP have merely condemned land that they cannot use for this purpose and needlessly put a family through this nightmare. This is why the New Hill citizens began our opposition by working with the Seymours to prevent the condemnation of their land. It does not matter if Al Seymour has cashed the check or not--if DENR does not approve the site it will be because of the many problem areas cited in their report addressing the draft Environmental Impact Statement. None of those issues change based on how the land for the site was acquired.

**Comment from: C. Heath [Visitor]** 08/10/06 at 14:10

Kim Fisher's statement is astoundingly offensive!

Are the bureaucrats that out of touch with the citizenry that they can unabashedly heap insult on top of insult with their stream of pronouncements?

Apparently so.

What Mr. Fisher is saying translates this way to me:

"It's all a misunderstanding on the part of the ignorant masses. We just didn't "dumb down" our explanation enough so the the public can swallow it"

**Comment from: Tonya [Visitor]** 08/10/06 at 14:22

Absolutely correct, C. Heath. Mr. Fisher's comments are particularly off-base, since he should by now be aware that the leaders of the New Hill community have thoroughly read and are very familiar with any and all documentation provided by the WWP. There are no misunderstandings. We understand exactly what happened in this process, and it stinks.

**Comment from: JohnB [Visitor]** · <http://johnforcary.livejournal.com> 08/10/06 at 16:30

Bad PR is a hallmark of our municipal gov't. That's a given, on issue after issue you can see that that is a fact.

How does the city explain that the easiest political choice, a Progress Energy site, would be the hardest one to actually get the land to build on?

Tonya, the rest of us aren't that darn stupid. You folks started off screaming "KELO" when this began without bothering to figure out that KELO had nothing to do with a legitimate

government use for private land. You folks continued screaming about a government taking long after Seymour took the money and walked away.

What this has degenerated into is a contest where you folks are basically throwing everything at the wall hoping something sticks. What it is is a classic case of NIMBYism. Everyone with any sense can see the need but no one wants the sewage treatment plant in their area. Let's not pretend this is about anything more than that.

**Comment from: Tonya [Visitor]** 08/10/06 at 16:58

John, If this were a case of NIMBYISM, we would not be satisfied with having the sewage facility placed on PE land. I don't think you're stupid; I do think you are tunnel-visioned on this issue. You are so hell-bent on defending Cary on this issue that you can't see the legitimacy of the complaints lodged by New Hill. Yes, we have "attacked" from a variety of angles, but only because there are so many and such a variety of problems with this project--beginning with the condemnation of land before the site was approved--which, if you recall, was our beef with the condemnation. From that point, as we began to research the project and the process, it became obvious that New Hill was targeted long ago. When the site selection study didn't show New Hill to be the best location for the sewage plant, Cary and the WWP scrapped the study and (SURPRISE!) picked New Hill anyway. You see it your way. I've read thousands and thousands of pages of documentation. I'll see it my way according to the info provided to me by your beloved town and its partners. And I will not apologize for continuing to fight this ill-conceived project in whatever manner is necessary--just as the WWP have pushed it forward.

**Comment from: JohnB [Visitor]** · <http://johnforcary.livejournal.com> 08/11/06 at 09:47

To conclude my interaction with you Tonya, let's clear a couple of things up.

I'm not defending Cary, I'm pointing out the raw truth about what you folks are doing. Nothing more, nothing less. I watched this mess from the beginning, it's too late for you folks to try to pretend that there was some intellectual, logical, or other consistency to your attacks aside from NIMBY.

That's fine, however, roads, schools, and sewage treatment plants still have to be built in spite of the infantile attacks claiming the condemnation of the land was an abuse of the law.

Whether New Hill is the "best" site to build on or not depends entirely on how "best" is defined. If "best" includes the political reality of not being able to get Progress Energy land New Hill might very well be "best".

Kim Fisher said what he said because unless he's an idiot he understands that anything and everything he says will get his ox gored so he is going to be very cautious. I doubt there is anything sinister going on, the overriding emotion is probably nothing more than dread.

So Apex annexes you folks when exactly?

**Comment from: Tonya [Visitor]** 08/11/06 at 10:40

Since John has concluded his interaction with me, graciously allowing me to have the last word on this (who knew he would be so chivalrous?), I will merely say AGAIN that our contention is not that the condemnation was an abuse of the law. Very early on in this process, the New Hill community recognized and publicly acknowledged that additional sewage treatment facilities are/will be needed and that this is a public use of land that satisfies the criteria for use of condemnation via eminent domain. Our issue lies with how the site was selected and the data used to justify the selection.

Although it is not especially relevant to this discussion, I will answer John's annexation query: Apex plans to annex New Hill--probably in about 10 years, according to the latest information from Apex town officials.

**Comment from: Bob [Visitor]** 08/26/06 at 09:05

So John B states, "I doubt there is anything sinister going on, the overriding emotion is probably nothing more than dread."

John, if you believe this, then why does Mayor McAlister have to lie to the Cary Town Council about the real truth of the site selection. He lied to them when they met to condemn the site. He told the town council that he and Ms. Dorrel met with New Hill residents and answered their questions. He & Ms. Dorrel did meet with a few residents from New Hill, but neither of them could answer the questions. He knows they did not answer the questions, yet he tells the Cary Town Council the questions were answered. To me, this is sinister.

Also, the documentation for the WWP clearly states that land acquisition needed to occur prior to June 2006. Assuming one can believe the WWP documentation, then why did Mayor McAlister tell the Cary Town Council that condemnation had to occur in 2005, otherwise the project would slip? To me, this is sinister.

Other lies the Mayor and Ms Moran have told;

The residents of New Hill will be able to benefit from the sewage plant;

Bill Coleman saying they have met with PE about their land, but then PE says they have never been asked for land;

The elected officials of Cary and Apex not making their electronic communications (e-mails) available to New Hill; etc.

Examples of all of these, and more are listed on [NewHillca.org](http://NewHillca.org).

McAlister and the people driving the sewage plant in New Hill have told more lies than I can count and certainly more than I can list here.

Still think there is nothing sinister going on? Also, why do the WWP refuse to do business in the sunshine? Why are their meetings so secret?

Yeah, I think there is a lot hiding under the table that McAlister, Weatherly, etc. hope the sunshine never shines on.

Bob