

# Cary mayor responds to council's resolution

## McAlister finds no flaws in site selection for sewage plant

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EDITOR

Although Apex Mayor Keith Weatherly isn't much of a gambler he certainly knows a sure bet when he sees it.

Cary Mayor Ernie McAlister recently sent a letter to the Apex town council concerning a resolution regarding the site selection for the West Regional Water Reclamation Facility.

This resolution, which was proposed by Councilman Mike Jones, had requested additional evaluation of an alternate site outside of New Hill.

But McAlister stated in his letter that the "siting process was not flawed and that there was no valid reason to revisit this issue."

To do so, wrote McAlister,

"would be costly, time consuming, harm the project schedule and not be in the best interest of the rate payers that we serve."

Cary is the lead partner in the project, which also includes Apex, Morrisville and Holly Springs.

McAlister's response was exactly what Weatherly expected.

During a heated discussion last month by the town council over the resolution, the mayor added some extra fuel to the fire.

Calling the resolution "an exercise in grandstanding," Weatherly offered to make a wager with anyone at the meeting that no members of the Western Wake Partnership would support the resolution.

According to Weatherly, McAlister's letter proved he was correct.

"I agree with what he said in the letter," said Weatherly. "His response was what I believe to be the case. The reality of the issue is the other site had been

adequately reviewed and scored lower than the selected site that has been acquired."

Councilman Bill Jensen, who has been an outspoken critic of the site selection, was also not surprised by McAlister's letter.

Jensen and fellow councilman Bill Sutton both pushed for a strongly worded resolution that was critical of the entire site selection process.

But they were voted down by Jones, Bryan Gossage and Gene Schulze who favored a much more timid resolution.

"The obvious happened because the resolution was so weak," said Jensen. "It didn't include the fact that the process was flawed."

"Bill Sutton tried to give the resolution some teeth but was voted down by the board."

*The Apex Herald* was unable to contact Jones for this story.

Although the issue is now being reviewed at the state level by the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural

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Resources; Jensen said the local fight to keep the sewage plant out of the heart of the New Hill community isn't finished yet.

He noted that he had been recently contacted by members of the Cary and Morrisville town councils who have concerns about the project.

"I believe there are folks in other towns still concerned about us literally dumping on those (New Hill) folks," said Jensen.

"I hope the state expands its evaluation of the environmental impact to also take into consideration the people environment."