

Searching for equality in New Hill

The United States is on the threshold of electing its first minority president. We are pleased to see equality being shown nationally, however, locally, equality is not taking place.

Take for example the recent actions by the Western Wake Partners (WWP), made up by the towns of Cary, Apex, Holly Springs, and Morrisville.

Cary, the lead partner for the WWP, has selected a site for their regional sewage plant that is in the center of New Hill, adjoining a residential neighborhood; the New Hill historic district; and two churches (both churches have cemeteries, and one has a playground.)

According to the 2000 Census, the residential neighborhood adjacent to the sewage plant site is 86.79 percent minority.

In an October 3, 2006 letter to Deputy Director of the Division of Water Quality, Coleen Sullins, Cary Town Manager Bill Coleman admitted Cary misrepresented these demographics when it submitted the Draft Environmental Statement to NC Department of Natural and Environmental Resources. In other words, Cary tried to cover up that the site for the sewage plant was surrounded by mostly minority residents.

The engineering firm that was hired by Cary to find a site for the regional sewage plant examined 29 sites around Western Wake County. Of the 29 sites, 3 ranked higher than the site in the center of New Hill.

Why did Cary skip the top

3 sites and choose the site ranked fourth?

These 3 highest ranked sites are located on Progress Energy property, where the Shearon Harris Nuclear Facility is located, only 1 mile from the selected site in the center of New Hill.

During the late 1960s and 1970s, the land for the Shearon Harris Nuclear Plant was forcibly acquired from the residents of New Hill by CP&L. This land was acquired for utility purposes.

Progress Energy (parent company of CP&L) has admitted CP&L took thousands more acres than needed to house the current and proposed nuclear reactors. As reported August 27, 2002 in *The News & Observer*, PE intends to develop this excess property into residential, commercial, and industrial complexes. Why should PE be able to develop land they forcibly acquired from New Hill residents?

Could it be the WWP thought the minority residents surrounding the plant did not have the wherewithal to stand up to Cary and Apex, and that is why the site in the center of New Hill was selected, which will allow PE to develop the excess property it took from New Hill residents?

Cary, Apex and the rest of the WWP partners, along with PE should do the right thing and place the regional sewage plant on PE property instead of the center of New Hill. After all, what is a sewage plant if not a utility?

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