



North Carolina General Assembly
Senate

SENATOR VALERIE P. FOUSHEE
23RD DISTRICT

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W-1320 Sub 0
W-1320 Sub 2
W-1300 Sub 55
W-661 Sub 9

COMMITTEES:

APPROPRIATIONS/GENERAL GOVERNMENT & INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY
COMMERCE AND INSURANCE
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HEALTHCARE

JOINT OVERSIGHT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES
GENERAL GOVERNMENT
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
PROGRAM EVALUATION

May 12, 2020

ATT: North Carolina Utilities Commission
Ms. Charlotte Mitchell – Chair
Ms. ToNala D. Brown-Bland
Mr. Lyons Gray
Mr. Daniel Clodfelter
Ms. Kimberly Duffley
Mr. Jeffrey Hughes
Mr. Floyd McKissick, Jr.

CC: North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Mr. Scott Vinson, Water Quality Regional Supervisor
Mr. Rick Bolich, Water Quality Program Supervisor

I am writing to express my support of an advocacy group representing concerned residents of Briar Chapel community, StopChathamNorth. Briar Chapel is currently comprised of 1,967 homes.

I met with this group on February 2, 2020 concerning significant issues they were having with their wastewater operator, Envirolink (owned by Old North State Water Company, ONSWC). The focus of our discussion was related to current and ongoing challenges faced by this community regarding their wastewater treatment. These challenges include a number of compliance violations in the form of spills, line breaks, and irrigation issues and most notably, significant nuisance odor conditions.

My meeting included a visit to the community and a tour around the wastewater treatment plant. As we approached the neighborhood next to the plant and the Sportsplex, I immediately noticed a noxious odor. We were travelling in a car with the windows up and yet this odor was so significant that it permeated the entire interior of the vehicle. I was shocked to see the extreme proximity of homes to the wastewater treatment plant and very concerned that residents have to live day after day in these conditions.

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The role of state agencies is to enforce regulations to protect residents from these types of issues. With up to 17 new communities planned in north Chatham in the near future, it is imperative to have a plan for strategic growth that addresses the critical issue of wastewater treatment prior to approving further development. The solution should be one that provides wastewater services in a location that does not impose these types of nuisance conditions on homeowners.

It is my opinion that expanding the wastewater treatment plant in Briar Chapel into a regional wastewater treatment facility is not in the best interest of this community considering the totality of the circumstances. This plant is currently located in the middle of a densely populated residential community. Expansion beyond the capacity needed for the Briar Chapel community would have a significant adverse effect on every homeowner in Briar Chapel. Accordingly, expansion does not seem to be appropriate and should not be considered until such time that current violations have been addressed and abated. The residents of this community were not apprised of this plant expansion, nor did they have a voice in the matter. The current operator has not proven the ability to effectively manage their current capacity.

I support limiting the expansion of this wastewater treatment plant to only the Briar Chapel community and encourage our regulatory agencies to support the residents of Briar Chapel by ensuring that ONSWC is being held accountable for full compliance of their operations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Valerie P. Foushee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "V" and "F".

Valerie P. Foushee

