

# NEWS

## Council approves alternative

By **SCOTT GREIG**  
City Editor

The Chapel Hill Town Council voted 8-1 Monday night to oppose the activation of the Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant. The council heard debate on both sides of the issue from Carolina Power & Light Co. officials and from representatives of the Coalition for Alternatives to Shearon Harris (CASH), including UNC Student Body President Bryan Hassel.

The standing-room-only crowd at the Municipal Building's meeting room broke into applause and cheers following the vote on the two resolutions.

In addition to asking that the Shearon Harris plant be converted to coal or gas fuel, the council also asked that the state and CP&L develop an evacuation plan that includes Chapel Hill. The resolutions of Durham and Carrboro did not include such a request.

Councilman David Pasquini dissented from the first resolution, which called for the conversion of Shearon Harris to a non-nuclear fuel plant to avoid the possibilities of a nuclear accident.

By a unanimous vote, the council passed the second resolution, which expressed the council's grave concerns about the plant and its safety.

Bryan Hassel said: "As student body president I must represent my students' opinions and desires to the outside community. I don't think that the 20,000 students at UNC want to be living less than 20 miles from a nuclear power plant."

Edward G. Lilly Jr., executive vice president for CP&L, said plans for completion of the plant are going to continue despite the vote.

"The plant is 97 percent complete as of the moment," Lilly said. "We plan to load the fuel this summer and begin operation later this year."

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission only requires that evacuation plans be set up for areas within a 10-mile radius of the plant. CASH supporters are quick to point out what they call the absurdity of that size limitation.

"Any accident serious enough to call for an evacuation is going to be serious enough to create problems outside of that 10-mile radius," said CASH member Wells Eddleman.

"If they don't feel that a 'worst case'

accident is possible, then how can they guard against it?" Eddleman asked.

R.B. Starkey Jr., manager of the company's nuclear safety and environmental services department, told the council that area residents need not worry about a Chernobyl-type accident occurring at Shearon Harris.

He said the Shearon Harris structure is different from the Soviet reactor in that it does have a containment vessel and is not graphite-moderated. Starkey said the accident at Chernobyl was precipitated by a hydrogen explosion that could not happen at the Harris plant because the process they use turns active hydrogen into inert water.

"Our safety policy shows we don't believe anything has a probability of zero," Starkey said. "That's why the walls of our containment vessel are four-and-a-half feet thick and steel-lined."

Lilly said there are now 11 nuclear units operating in North and South Carolina. He added, "If they weren't operating safely, they wouldn't be operating at all."

Lightning A. Brown, from CASH's Orange County Working Group, said the council's action on the resolutions shows CP&L that local governments are concerned.

## Ads face criticism

By **MATT LONG**  
Staff Writer

The Coalition for Alternatives to Shearon Harris (CASH) has prepared a point-by-point response to the newspaper advertisements paid for June 3 by the Carolina Power & Light Company stockholders.

In a question-and-answer format, the full page ads explained why converting the Shearon Harris nuclear power plant to a fossil fuel plant would be impractical.

They said the conversion would cost \$1.5 billion, on top of the \$3.5 billion already spent, and the plant would not be operable until 1993. The ads also claimed the 10-mile evacuation area is sufficient and has been tested safely.

CASH's response questions CP&L's assumptions that the consumer would pay for the cost of abandoning the plant instead of the stockholders. It also brings

out the point that the "original estimate of construction costs was exceeded by 800 percent."

According to the group, CP&L has had 10 potentially dangerous accidents at its other nuclear plants. This refutes CP&L's claims that it has operated "three other nuclear units for a cumulative total of 35 years without impact on the health and safety of employees or the public."

Of the 10-mile evacuation plan, the group asks, "What force stops radiation at an imaginary 10-mile line?" The response recalls that the Chernobyl accident was discovered by the Swedes.

CASH doubts that CP&L can execute the evacuation plan. "The plans assume three to four hours for evacuation," the response said. "A bad accident would send radioactivity over the countryside before the emergency plan could even get started."

## Carrboro keeps funds

By **SHIRLEY NESBITT**  
Staff Writer

The N.C. Local Government Commission granted Carrboro a waiver

this week from the state requirement that 40 percent of sales tax revenue from must be spent on water and sewer needs.

The waiver allows Carrboro to keep a total of \$140,000 in water and sewer money, instead of requiring the money to be given to the Orange Water and Sewer Authority.

"The town of Carrboro does not operate its own utilities and therefore could use the money for other community needs," said Robert Morgan, Carrboro's town manager.

The money comes from Carrboro's half-cent sales tax proceeds. Carrboro does not own its own water and sewer system. Before the waiver went into effect, the money went to OWASA.

Carrboro is one of the ten towns that have been granted waivers. This is the second two-year exemption Carrboro has received.

Morgan said the extra \$70,000 Carrboro will receive is not earmarked for any specific purpose. "It is to be part of the general fund, for capital reserves, street repair, etc."

Two years from now, Carrboro may not be able to keep the water and sewer money, but for now, it will be able to use the money for the general fund.

"If the community does not need the money in the water and sewage area, then we need to set up our priority needs for the money," Morgan said. "In fairness, municipalities should be able to use those funds where the community needs exist."

Instead of applying for a waiver, Chapel Hill places its revenue from the taxes into a special fund and uses the money for utility extensions. Chapel Hill officials have said that they plan to continue to store the proceeds from this tax in the fund.

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