

Crowd Gathers to Oppose Northside Drive Asphalt Plant



Neil Furr/CITIZEN

MAXWELL COMBS, who lives less than a mile from the proposed Maymead asphalt plant on Northside Drive, proudly displayed his sign admonishing Council to disallow the plant Council proceedings on Feb. 18. Plans to approve the plant were stalled by a 3-3 vote.

the motion himself to approve the subdivision, which was seconded by Bonita Eisele. Before the vote was taken, Cecil Stallard commented that he would have "a problem

AN OVERFLOW CROWD of more than 100 people watched Council proceedings on closed-circuit television at the Statesville Civic Center. The fire marshal's office decided that the crowd would be too large to handle in Council Chambers alone.

Neil Furr
IREDELL CITIZEN

THE MURAL BY LOCAL ARTIST FRANS VAN BERGEN, dominating the east wall of Statesville's City Council chambers, depicts the marriage of pretty little residential Iredell with a strong, gear-toting industrial partner.

Of late, with the approval of a bio-diesel processing plant in the Snow Creek community despite neighbors' objections and now an attempt by Maymead Industries to place an asphalt plant at 2520 Northside Drive, again over neighbors' objections, that marriage seems a bit rocky.

One thing is certain, though; placing such things as bio-diesel and asphalt plants anywhere near residences can surely spark an interest among the citizenry in the workings of local government. That's why it wasn't at all surprising to find so many citizens occupying the 100 or so chairs at City Council Monday, Feb. 18, with two items related to the proposed Maymead asphalt plant on the agenda. The concerned citizenry overflowed Council chambers, as expected, and more than 100 watched by closed-circuit television from a room across the street at the Statesville Civic Center.

So packed was City Hall that even David Currier, city planner, who would present Maymead's sketch plan for Council consideration, had no seat. That was just as well; the meeting did not last nearly so long as expected.

Long or not, the meeting began with an interesting twist that

turned out to be crucial. To begin with, Council was down by two members with John Gregory out for foot surgery and Paula Steele away on a long, scheduled trip. The nine-member council went down by another member when Mayor Costi Kutteh recused himself from the proceedings because a law partner, William Pope, represented Maymead in the proceedings.

Following Kutteh's recusal, Mayor pro tem Michael Johnson assumed center chair and launched into the first agenda item concerning Maymead, which was consideration to subdivide the 20-plus acres of property into three lots.

Immediately after Currier's discussion of the sketch plan, Council members Cecil Stallard


and Flake Huggins had questions about the size and depth of three ponds on the property.

"Everything feeds into the large (pond)," Huggins observed. "This goes into Fourth Creek."

Huggins also questioned Currier about how much heavy industrial zoning and use there was in the area versus light industrial zoning and use. He noted that properties to the north and south of Maymead properties were light industrial. Currier responded that "the balance of the area is being used for industrial purposes."

Soon after his comments, Michael Johnson called for a motion on the subdivision request. After a few moments of silence, he made

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