

Lynn Richardson

From: Jim and Bev Wiggins [jimerly@earthlink.net]
Sent: Friday, July 07, 2006 5:05 PM
To: lynn.richardson@ncmail.net
Subject: comments on Sanctuary proposal

Hi Lynn--

I'm attaching my comments in a Word document and also as part of this email. If you need me to drop off hard copies, let me know how many. Thanks, Bev Wiggins

7 July 2006

Ms. Lynn Richardson
Chatham Co. Planning Department

Dear Mr. Richardson and Planning Board:

I am writing to express my disappointment with the response of the developers of The Sanctuary at Haw River (formerly called Williams Pond), to the County's request that a preliminary field reconnaissance archaeological survey be conducted to determine the existence or absence of any site of likely archaeological significance on the property to be developed. It is disappointing and frustrating that the report the developers commissioned is so superficial and inadequate.

I spoke at the public hearing in November 2004 on the Williams Pond property to note that the developer seemed unaware of the existence, according to County records, of two abandoned cemeteries on the property. I was satisfied with the County's requirement that a preliminary field reconnaissance archaeological survey be done to locate historical sites, structures, and artifacts.

I was aware that the Chatham County Historical Association assisted with locating one of the cemeteries traditionally believed to be on the property. It was my, perhaps naïve, assumption that one of the key goals of the reconnaissance survey would be to gather additional information about the second, unlocated, cemetery and to assess its presence or absence on the property. However, when the reconnaissance report was made available to the public just days ago, I found absolutely no mention of the second cemetery. Did the archaeologist who conducted the study try to find out if anyone in the area might know where it was? Did he look for it? If so, where? We don't know. Was the developer disappointed that the report didn't address this question? Apparently not. The report was submitted in August of 2005, so there has been plenty of time for the developer to obtain a more thorough study of this question.

I realize that it may not be possible to find the second cemetery. Its purported existence may be a myth—though it is one fairly pervasive and long-held. It may have been disturbed in the past by agricultural or other activities. My point is that we don't know, because the developer has failed to commission a study that can answer this question. This lack of sensitivity to the cultural heritage of the County is unfortunate. I believe that the historic cemeteries of the county deserve your attention and protection. I respectfully request that you require the developer to commission another study to specifically address the presence or absence of the cemetery traditionally believed to be north of Williams Pond on the property to be developed before any ground disturbing activity is conducted in that area.

7/10/2006

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Sanctuary development proposal.

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