Winston Salem owns land next to proposed asphalt plant. Neighbors want it to stay that way.



Opponents have organized in opposition to a proposed asphalt plant in Clemmons.

No Asphalt Clemmons

Opponents of a proposed asphalt plant in Clemmons urged Winston-Salem leaders on Monday to resist any offers to buy city-owned land for the project.

Winston-Salem owns a pair of properties totaling more than 35 acres immediately north of the 7-acre site where Tennessee-based Maymead is seeking an air-quality permit for the plant.

The city land, on Gun Club Road, is the site of a former Winston-Salem Police Department firing range.

Doug Geiger, who lives near the Maymead property, on Greendale Way, told council that 7 acres is smaller than the footprint of the company's other asphalt facilities.

"So, to think that they're going to stay small is just probably not going to happen," he said.

Geiger said others opposing the plant would follow.

At that point, however, it remained unclear what the opponents were asking the city to do.

As Geiger returned to his seat, Mayor Allen Joines asked Chris Murphy, the planning director for the city and Forsyth County, to clarify what jurisdiction the plant is in.

"Just to be clear, mayor and council, this is located within the village of Clemmons," Murphy replied.

Andrea Vail, who followed Geiger to the lectern, clarified the message.

"This property is owned by the city, and I urge the council to keep it in public hands," she urged. "And please never sell it to the asphalt plant that is proposed just next door."

The Journal asked city officials about the speakers' messages following the meeting.

"I understand what they're concerned about," said Murphy, the planning director. "They have gone to county commissioners. They've gone to the Village of Clemmons. They've gone to Davidson County, and now they've come here."

Murphy added that through an arrangement with Clemmons, his office would be responsible for issuing the air-quality permit but under Clemmons' ordinances. Those regulations would allow the asphalt plant, given the property's current general industrial zoning, to operate with the air-quality permit.

As for the city potentially selling land to Maymead, "We haven't been approached," City Manager Pat Pate said.

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