

# THE Mecklenburg TIMES

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## Town unsure about private wastewater plant

BY CAROLYN STEEVES

**WEDDINGTON** — There is a limited amount of sewer space in Union County and that's causing some developers to innovate in order to acquire the sewer space they need.

One such development, The Woods, has created a stir with a proposal to build an onsite, private wastewater treatment plant.

The Weddington Town Council met Monday to hear arguments from both sides and eventually decide whether or not to approve IB Development's private wastewater treatment plant proposal. There was not enough time for all of the presentations to be made and another hearing will be held next week.

"We didn't even come close to finishing the presentation," Weddington Mayor Nancy Anderson told **The Mecklenburg Times**. "We are far from having all the answers. We don't even have all of the questions yet."

Roughly 300 people attended the hearing, many bearing signs in protest of the private sewer proposal. Citizens are worried about the private plant

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having a negative impact on property values, possible environmental harm, a bad smell and other concerns.

Janice Propst, a member of the citizen's group Friends of Weddington, told **The Times** in June that she was concerned about the lack of infrastructure in Weddington. She said a lot of people do not consider a wastewater treatment facility infrastructure.

"I'm not against development, I just want it to be developed properly and I don't think private wastewater treatment plants are the answer," Propst explained.

She said her family has owned property adjacent to the proposed Woods property for five generations. She is concerned about a wastewater treatment plant on her property line.

Anderson said council members are determined to get as much information as possible about the issue before voting. "It's going to be a slow and deliberate process," she said. "We're going to do a very thorough job."

Philip Walton, a partner with Infinity Partners, one of the two organizations that, along with The Base Group, make up IB Development, told **The Times** in June that his group saw problems with sewer space in Union County and brought in an expert to look at alterna-

tives, including a conditional septic system. When the developers found septic wasn't a viable option, an onsite wastewater treatment plant became more attractive.

Walton said there is a "shift in public dialogue about green and sustainability and the need to be more conscientious." A wastewater plant would solve the problem of inadequate sewer capacity and would beneficially reuse water, he said.

Some citizens are concerned about reusing water, but Walton said developers "certainly would not be putting either gray water or black water on lawns — that would be dangerous."

Anderson is interested to hear more about the water conservation plans, but

said, "The Town Council's job is to look out for all of Weddington, not just this property ... we have to assess this and see how it fits into the big picture."

However, Anderson said she needs to hear the rest of the presentations. At this point she's uncertain of how council members are leaning.

"I don't even know how I'm feeling about it yet," she said. "I am quite certain that the other council members are just patiently waiting until all the facts get out, then we'll deliberate on them."

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