



New Hanover County, NC Special Use Permit (SUP)

On June 2, our Stop Titan campaign organized local residents to attend the New Hanover County Commissioners' Meeting in opposition of proposed zoning ordinance revisions that would have weakened the County's SUP requirements. Since the County's Planning Committee began formulating the revisions in November 2013, the Stop Titan campaign has shown a strong presence at Planning Board Meetings, and has held multiple activist events to inform the public and generate 'lead' and 'lead-supporting' actions from our volunteer base. The County Commissioners' Meeting was the first time the revisions were considered for a vote, and our efforts were successful in helping prevent passage of the proposal (the vote was split 2-2). The SUP revision process will now go back to the planning department to be considered either as part of the County's ongoing Comprehensive Plan or staff could bring another proposed revision before the planning board and County Commissioners at a later date.

Preparation for the event began three weeks in advance. Volunteers were divided into three teams to coordinate media communications, community engagement, and planning/logistics. Local media outlets (WECT, WWAY, WHQR, StarNews, Encore, Lumina News, Port City Daily) were provided with press releases the week prior to the meeting. Weekly Facebook and email notifications were sent to members of the Stop Titan Action Network and phone banking efforts began two weeks prior to the meeting. An activist training event was held the week prior to the Commissioners' meeting to inform citizens of the SUP revisions and increase volunteer support. Actions leading up to the meeting consisted of LTEs and in-person meetings, letters, emails, and phone calls to targeted Commissioners. Speakers for public comment were recruited in the weeks leading up to the meeting and represented local business, environmental groups, and residents concerned with the revisions' public health implications.

NCCF fellow Jessica Gray and volunteers Nancy Card, Kayne Darrell, Sherry O'Daniell, Julie Hurley, and Alden Picard, generated and disseminated the majority of the media and general communications content which was then picked up by our partner organizations (Cape Fear River Watch and Pender

Watch). NCCF staff members Mike Giles and Tracy Skrabal and volunteers Ashley Daniels, Kayne Darrell, Sherry O’Daniell, and Kyle Horton lobbied targeted County Commissioners (Beth Dawson and Jonathan Barfield) on behalf of our cause, and secured notable community leaders for public comment. Ashley Daniels and Laura Kellogg made passionate speeches during the meeting, and are ideal candidates for leadership development. Mike Giles, Tracy Skrabal, Rob Zapple, Tom Looney, Bette Bauereis, and Kevin Cannon used their professional expertise to effectively communicate the need for a strong SUP.

A strong SUP plays an integral role in preventing Titan Cement from becoming a part of our community and provides the tools necessary for our local elected officials to make informed decisions on what industry is appropriate in our community. By rallying behind our like-minded County Commissioners, we were able to leverage our support and secure a tie vote on the SUP decision. This victory accomplishes several goals: It temporarily protects the SUP, reinforces the alliance between our campaign and key local officials, and bolsters citizens’ faith in the local political process and their ability to make an impact.

Click the following links to see local media coverage of the event.

<http://www.wect.com/story/25675363/commissioners-reject-changes-to-special-use-permit-process>

<http://whqr.org/post/amended-sup-subject-nhc-county-commission-vote-and-public-hearing>

<http://www.starnewsonline.com/article/20140602/ARTICLES/140609942?p=2&tc=pg>

<http://www.wwaytv3.com/2014/06/03/chamber-not-happy-with-commissioners-dawson-and-barfields-vote-special-use-permit-changes>

<http://luminanews.com/2014/06/proposed-sup-changes-meet-county-stalemate/>

<http://portcitydaily.com/2014/06/02/split-votes-result-in-no-decisions-on-special-use-permit-porters-neck-development/>

<http://newhanovernc.swagit.com/play/11182013-502>

The Numbers

- Number of volunteer organizers: 10
- Number of attendees in opposition of SUP revisions (overall turnout): 120
- Number of speakers: 13 (7 of whom were recruited during our community outreach process)
- Total number of citizens contacted (via email, Facebook, phone, but not including media): 5,500-6,500
- Number of contacts via phone banking: 672
- Number of LTEs generated: 24

- Number of letters/emails to County Commissioners: 68
- Number of phone calls to County Commissioners: 44
- Number of media hits: 9

