

Mound House residents oppose site expansion

By Anne Knowles
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Mound House residents who live near a Carson City asphalt plant on Highway 50 East came out Wednesday to oppose an expansion of the site's operations.

In public comment, 10 nearby residents spoke emotionally about suffering from the odor the plant produces and concerns about its health effects.

"It gets in your nose, it gets in your mouth. You can taste it," said Laura Webster, one nearby neighbor. "It is nasty and it can't be good for you."

The residents spoke during a meeting of the Planning Commission, which was considering a modification of a special use permit (SUP) for Tahoe Western Asphalt that would allow the plant to operate an hour earlier, and at night for up to 30 days a year.

The application said the additional hours are needed to meet demand, especially from upcoming road projects, including Carson City's South Carson Street project and improvements on Highway 50 from Stagecoach to Silver Springs.

The commission voted 5-1 to approve the modification with conditions that included adding a chemical additive to the manufacturing process to reduce odors. The SUP will also be reviewed in a year to see if the additive is working.

Commissioner Hope Tingle voted no, saying she approved of the condition to reduce the odors,

but couldn't affirm the necessary findings to approve the request. Commissioner Elyse Monroy, was absent.

Staff said air quality is the purview of the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP), but the city could try to mitigate odor by adding conditions to the modified SUP.

"We have two options. We can vote no and it continues as is," said Commission Chair Mark Sattler, or vote yes and add the new condition, which could reduce or eliminate the odor.

Tahoe Western's initial SUP to operate the plant was approved in 2011, but the business didn't begin manufacturing asphalt until July, 2016.

Since then, NDEP's Bureau of Air Pollution has cited it repeatedly.

"Between January 2017 and March of 2018, NDEP cited the business seven times for violations related to air quality, and assessed fines of \$61,055," reads the staff report.

To date, NDEP has received \$11,650 in payments with seven more payments totaling \$16,300 due by year end.

The applicant provided four recent inspection reports saying the plant is now in compliance, and NDEP submitted a letter dated Oct. 16 affirming the business' permit is now in good standing.

The business has also been cited three times by Carson City code enforcement for operating during

hours not allowed by the original SUP.

Carson City also received 56 complaints from residents regarding the plant's odors and hours of operation since it started up.

Residents at the meeting asked why instead of modifying the SUP it couldn't be terminated.

The Planning Commission can consider revocation of an SUP if the applicant doesn't comply with terms or conditions.

"The commission, upon its own motion, or upon the sworn complaint in writing of any person, or upon information presented by the director shall request that the director investigate the conduct of any applicant under this chapter to determine whether grounds for revocation or reexamination of any variance or special use permit exist," according to city code.

The city of Fernley experienced a similar situation in 2015, when residents complained about odors emanating from the Paramount-Nevada Asphalt Co. plant there.

The company eventually added a regenerative thermal oxidizer, which cost \$1.2 million to install.

An additive costs much less, and city staff recommended giving that option a try to see if the lower cost solution worked.

Sattler asked if the SUP could be reviewed sooner, but the applicant, Robert Matthew, said the plant will close down in a month and operate only for a few days between then and March or April.

NNDA told 'green' can be profitable

By Geoff Dornan
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The Northern Nevada Development Authority was told Wednesday morning being "green" doesn't have to cost businesses on their bottom line.

Chris Lynch, head of the UNR Business Environmental Program, told an audience of about 40 he was told by one businessman "environmental is nice, but I don't have time for it."

"First, when it's the environment, you don't have a choice," he said. "You have to comply."

The alternative, he said, fines and even jail time. Lynch cited one company he said makes an aftermarket product that can boost horsepower of a diesel engine. The problem, it actually increased particulate emissions beyond EPA standards so, when the government found out, they levied a heavy fine on the company. The problem was if the device was used on a race track, it was legal but not if used on a street vehicle.

He said the solution was for the company to do a "supplemental environmental project" instead of paying a fine so the company chose to fund a rebate program to help wood stove owners swap out their old inefficient stove for a new, less polluting stove. He said that program has resulted in replacing nearly 200 old woodstoves in the Reno Sparks area.

Lynch said the UNR center is focused on building better businesses while reducing environmental impacts and even increasing a company's market share. He said creative analysis of a business's practices can make it more green and more efficient

without hurting — and often times helping — the bottom line.

He said the center can help businesses start that process by doing "a full compliance review." He said that means such things as installing LED lights. He cited an area casino that swapped out old style lights for LEDs, starting with "all those hallways that are lit 365 days a year." That change, he said, produced a \$20,000 savings a month. The automobile museum in Reno, he said, converted to LED lighting at a cost of \$37,000, resulting in savings that paid that amount off in just 16 months.

He said a manufacturing company that used solvent for cleaning was buying 125 gallons every month while disposing of the old solvent as hazardous waste for \$40,000 a year.

After they bought a solvent recovery system, the company saved \$34,000 a year in solvent purchases and waste disposal costs by reusing most of that solvent.

Lynch said being green can produce significant savings for businesses if those businesses think outside the box and look at what they're using and how it might be changed.

He said one interesting proposal is by a company at Lake Tahoe looking to bring Tesla-style electric sports boats to the lake.

"You might start seeing these really quiet boats out on Lake Tahoe — much less polluting," he said.

"Sometimes it's easy," he said. "Sometimes it takes hard thinking. Opportunities abound."

For those interested, Lynch said the Nevada Business Environmental Center is there to help — and does it for free.

VINTAGE

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A new phasing plan would move construction of the assisted living/independent living facilities from the first phase to the fifth and final phase, or the third phase in an alternative proposal.

Instead, a section of house lots on the east side of Ormsby Boulevard would constitute the first phase of construction, and houses on the west side of Ormsby, and on

the north side of that property, would be built out in the second phase. The lots on the south side of that property would be done in the fourth phase.

The final modification is to the requirement for building height, which would eliminate a measurement methodology the application says doesn't comply with city code. Building heights would remain the same — 22 feet for single-family houses and ancillary buildings, and 28 feet for congregated care buildings.

Infobrij Manager LLC, based in Irvine, Calif., describes itself as "a full-service capital raising organization" providing such services as underwriting, entitlement procurement, and construction management.

The property owner remains Andersen Family Associates.

The Vintage at Kings Canyon was originally proposed in early 2016 by developer Vince Scott, who announced the project in a public meeting attended by more 300 residents. The plan faced opposition from

nearby homeowners, and the Planning Commission moved their meeting considering the PUD to the Bob Boldrick Theater to accommodate the public.

The project has remained stalled for almost two years, and the 78-acre property was briefly put back on the market last year.

Vintage at Kings Canyon includes 128 assisted living units and 32 independent living units and, under the new proposal, 197 single-family houses.

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