

Anthony changes plans

BY CHARLES SOWELL

staff writer

Jim Anthony has changed his application to DHEC for sewage disposal at the Cliffs at Mountain Park and no longer plans to discharge 175,000 gallons of treated waste water a day into the river, according to the agency.

The announcement didn't appease the 150 attendees at a public hearing at North Greenville University's Hamlin Recital Hall. Many carried signs urging DHEC to "Save Our Saluda." Anthony did not attend the meeting.

The Cliffs at Mountain Park is located near the intersection of state Route 11 and U.S. 25 in northern Greenville County near the North Carolina border and Anthony's Cliffs at Glassy Mountain.

Jeff DeBessonet, DHEC's director of water facilities permitting, said the new plan was "the tightest set of limits that we have set anywhere in the state" and will result in water that "isn't what you'd want to drink, but is extremely clean."

The change in the application came after weeks of intense negotiations with Upstate Forever and was called "significant" by Brad Wyche, Upstate Forever's executive director. "But we are disappointed that Mr. Anthony has refused to sign a binding agreement with



Michelle Mogavero/Staff

RIVER SUPPORTERS: Many in the crowd at North Greenville University carried "Save Our Saluda" placards as they came to protest the Cliffs at Mountain Park plans for sewage disposal.

us to implement the changes."

Mary Anne Inglis, wife of Congressman Bob Inglis, read a letter from the representative that said the change is "... certainly what I'd expected of >

> a development that claims to be environmentally sensitive.

"In order to earn that reputation, I'd ask the Cliffs: (a) commit in writing not to discharge to the river except under emergency conditions... (b) demonstrate that the proposed treatment technology meets the specified treatment levels; (c) ensure that all operations along the North Saluda River are consistent with its use as a Trout Put Grow and Take stream designation."

The state Department of Natural Resources has managed the North Saluda for years under that designation. DHEC, on the other hand, rates the stream as "fresh water" and, while this is a high designation, it isn't sufficient to the use

as a trout stream, said Meta Armstrong of Trout Unlimited.

Greenville County Soil and Water Conservation District objected to the modified plan unless concerns about the stream's water-quality designation as freshwater, non-source pollution (runoff from the golf course) and sedimentation are addressed.

The district also wants DHEC to ensure that downstream users, farmers and residents of Saluda Lake, are protected under existing state regulations on water quality for the Blue Ridge Mountains ecoregion.

The sharpest criticism came from people who live around the project or just downstream.

"I own that river. As a taxpayer everyone does. I've called DHEC about sedimentation problems (during construction) and got no response. You can walk across sections of it (the river) and not get your cuffs wet," said Lynn Huth, who lives directly across state Route 11 from the Cliffs.

Greenville lawyer Frank Holleman, who has worked on issues concerning the Reedy River, which flows through downtown Greenville, also said, "Once you lose it (the North Saluda), you can never get it back. The Reedy (River) was lost in that manner and it has never come back to what it once was."

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