

# Developer gets grilled

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It comes down to a matter of trust in the dispute between developer Jim Anthony and environmental groups who oppose his plans for development along the North Saluda River.

The environmentalists believe Anthony has squandered whatever trust he may have built up by closing roads with little notice, trespassing on Greenville Watershed land, and a series of land deals and swaps that some consider questionable.

Anthony sees his organization as having met all the requirements of the law governing his developments. He said his group has gone beyond those requirements in many instances.

Congressman Bob Inglis and his wife, Mary Anne, took Anthony to task on road closings at a meeting hosted by the state Department of Health and Environmental Control last week.

"How can anyone in the community trust you when you're closing roads without telling anyone?" Inglis asked.

Anthony said, "I did everything I was required to do."

The Inglis family home borders on Anthony's Cliffs at Mountain Park project and one of the roads in question



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**MAKING A POINT:** Developer Jim Anthony explains changes in his plans for the North Saluda River.

was often used by the congressman for mountain biking.

Originally, Anthony's plans for the Cliffs at Mountain Park had included radically changing the character of a 2.5-mile stretch of the river and dumping more than 175,000 gallons of treated sewage a day into the stream.

Brad Wyche, executive director of Upstate Forever, negotiated changes in Anthony's plans for the development after a firestorm of public protest.

The nature of those original plans and their nearly making it through the regulatory process before being discovered are part of the trust >

> issue, said Dianne Anastos, director of Save Our Saluda - a grass-roots organization devoted to preserving as much of the Saluda rivers' watershed as possible.

As it worked out, Wyche's negotiations, coupled with the public protest, prompted Anthony to make some changes in his proposals to regulatory agencies. As it stands now, the Cliffs plan to broadcast treated wastewater over their golf course and other public grounds. They also have radically changed their plans for the river itself; scaling back on rechanneling and bridges and increasing riparian buffers.

However, Anthony refuses to sign any binding commitments to those plans, preferring to leave it up to state and federal agencies to ensure compliance.

Those non-binding plans drew some sharp questioning at last week's meeting. Frank Holleman, a Greenville attorney and environmental activist, quizzed Kyle Graham of Environmental Permitting, Inc., the private company Anthony uses to handle wetlands issues, on details of the Cliffs' scaled-down plans for the river.

Essentially, the plans are for major work on less than 1,000 feet of river front with riparian buffers 25 feet wide beside the river.

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**NOT CONVINCED:** Congressman Bob Inglis during last week's meeting hosted by DHEC.