

**From:** Daphne Quinn (Rep. Graig Meyer) **On Behalf Of** Rep. Graig Meyer

**Sent:** Friday, July 31, 2020 6:03 PM

**To:** 'Nunna, Shrikar' <[shrikar.nunna@ncdenr.gov](mailto:shrikar.nunna@ncdenr.gov)>; Rep. Graig Meyer <[Graig.Meyer@ncleg.net](mailto:Graig.Meyer@ncleg.net)>

**Cc:** Hicks, Joy A <[joy.hicks@ncdenr.gov](mailto:joy.hicks@ncdenr.gov)>; 'michael.regan@ncdenr.gov' <[michael.regan@ncdenr.gov](mailto:michael.regan@ncdenr.gov)>

**Subject:** RE: [External] Letter from Rep. Meyer Requesting Postponement of Public Hearing

Shrikar,

Although I am disappointed, I appreciate your response to my letter requesting Secretary Regan postpone the public hearing on air quality permits for two proposed Carolina Sunrock LLC facilities scheduled for August 3, 2020.

As you correctly pointed out, many Caswell County residents are “interested in this permit application,” but I would characterize it as more concern than interest. The residents of the Anderson Community, especially, are distressed because they feel they are a marginalized community that already experiences a disproportionate amount of pre-existing health conditions. Their fear is that having an asphalt plant, with all of the resulting emissions of known toxic substances, located so near their community would further exacerbate the known health issue of its residents.

Sadly, DHHS did not actually conduct a health study or “imminent health risk” assessment of the Anderson Community specifically, as requested by the Caswell County Health Department on behalf of the residents of Anderson Community. Instead, they opted to consider a literature review of four previously completed health consultations related to asphalt plants from the Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry (ATSDR). I have found many issues with these reviews of the ATSDR health consultations in their relevance to the Anderson Community. However, the two that I believe should be most concerning to the Department of Environmental Quality are:

- 1) Three of the four studies were conducted in other states (and two of those studies took place in Arizona and Utah—states that have vastly different climates, weather patterns, terrain and geological features than North Carolina) and
- 2) Three of the four studies were completed fifteen or more years ago and the third (and most relevant study because it was at least conducted in North Carolina {Rowan County}) was completed over a decade ago

It would seem reasonable to expect that there have been changes in the amounts of some emissions deemed toxic and that there have been changes to the air sensors originally used in these studies to measure the toxins that might lead to different results today. In fact, the EPA is [currently conducting several studies](#) aimed at improving the accuracy of air sensors.

Of course, it was the right thing to do to postpone the public hearing originally scheduled for March due to COVID-19 concerns. I appreciate that the public comment period has remained open this entire time, and I realize that it is very unusual occurrence. However, I am sure that Secretary Regan and everyone at DEQ would agree that during this pandemic, we are in truly “unusual times,” which is precisely why I requested a further postponement. Back in March and April, the residents of the Anderson Community were following Governor Cooper’s “Stay at Home” order and not going out to their doctors’ offices to get their pre-existing condition determinations. While it is true that the “Stay at Home” order has been lifted, for many residents of this community, due to their health vulnerabilities and the surge in COVID-19 cases

in Caswell County, it still is not safe nor advisable for them to visit their doctors. Therefore, many of them still do not have their doctor certified health determinations to enter into the public comments.

Despite believing that these are valid reasons for the postponement of the public hearing, I understand that it is DEQ's intent to move forward with holding it on August 3, 2020. I further believe that it is the duty of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality to preserve the quality of the environment for all North Carolina citizens, even, and perhaps most importantly, those living in small, rural, often marginalized communities.

**Therefore, I would like to request that Secretary Regan join me on a visit to the Anderson Community in Caswell County. It would provide an excellent opportunity for him to meet these citizens and learn first-hand more about the possible environmental and potential health impacts that this proposed asphalt plant could have on their small community.**

Rep. Graig Meyer  
NCGA House District 50  
Serving Orange and Caswell Counties

**From:** Nunna, Shrikar <[shrikar.nunna@ncdenr.gov](mailto:shrikar.nunna@ncdenr.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 30, 2020 2:57 PM  
**To:** Rep. Graig Meyer <[Graig.Meyer@ncleg.net](mailto:Graig.Meyer@ncleg.net)>  
**Cc:** Daphne Quinn (Rep. Graig Meyer) <[Meyerla@ncleg.net](mailto:Meyerla@ncleg.net)>; Hicks, Joy A <[joy.hicks@ncdenr.gov](mailto:joy.hicks@ncdenr.gov)>  
**Subject:** Re: [External] Letter from Rep. Meyer Requesting Postponement of Public Hearing

Rep. Meyer,

Thank you for your letter. We have been hearing from a lot of people interested in this permit application, and we appreciate your comments as well.

The DHHS study was completed and published on July 17<sup>th</sup>, and it is now available on the DEQ website on the [Carolina Sunrock Public Hearing Page](#). Here is a direct link:<https://files.nc.gov/ncdeq/Air%20Quality/permits/carolina-sunrock/NCDHHS-Caswell-County-Literature-Review-FINAL-07-17-2020.pdf>. Please feel free to share this with any of your constituents that may be interested.

The original public hearing for these air quality permits was scheduled to be in March, but had to be postponed due to COVID-19. The public comment period has been open for that entire time, and will close on August 7<sup>th</sup>. This is very unusual for the public comment period to be open for this long.

Based on these factors, we do not feel it is necessary to postpone the public hearing even further. All of this information and comments provided to us, including the DHHS report, will be taken into consideration by the Division of Air Quality. Once the public comment period has ended, we will review all of the comments and either approve, deny, or request additional information.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss further with me or with DEQ staff, please let me know! We are glad to listen to any concerns you or the community may have.

Sincerely,  
Shrikar