

ATTACHMENT 5

AGENDA # 3a(1)

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-----Original Message-----

From: Dana Cattani [mailto:dcattani@nc.rr.com]**Sent:** Monday, February 25, 2002 9:57 PM**To:** Town Council**Subject:** Unsightly Power Lines and Carol Woods

Dear Mayor and Town Council of Chapel Hill:

We petition the Council to consider the following modification (in italics) to the Chapel Hill Development Ordinance (July 2000) 14.10:

All utility lines, *including three-phase electric power distribution lines*, but excluding lines used only to transmit electricity between generating stations or substations shall be placed underground, and all surface disruptions required for installation shall be rehabilitated to the original or an improved condition.

Although the current ordinance permits above-ground three-phase electric power distribution lines to be installed, market pressures dictate that new developments, such as Meadowmont, bury such lines. However, there is nothing to prevent Duke Power from providing service to these new developments by running new three-phase power lines through existing easements outside the new developments. In such cases, new developments can disfigure their neighbors' properties in a way that developers deem unacceptable for their own property.

For example, a couple of months ago, Duke Power installed new three-phase power lines through an existing easement in our backyard in order to provide service to Carol Woods' new development under construction directly behind our property. The easement, which predates our neighborhood, had been neglected and densely overgrown. Unfortunately, the easement is located not at the edge of our backyard but rather within the confines of our property. Before installing these new three-phase lines, Duke Power clearcut the easement, removing a thirty foot swath of forest in our back yard visible directly outside our kitchen window.

It seems inconsistent to us that Duke Power be allowed to run new above-ground lines through our neighborhood where all utilities are underground in order to service a new development that also has completely underground utilities. Above-ground power lines may have made sense at the original date of the easement on our property, but they are now inconsistent with current market standards, and not used in the development for which they are providing new service: Carol Woods' development in process. New developments are willing to pay for underground lines within their property; they also should be required to pay for burying any new utilities not on their property introduced to service their development.

Power lines are an eye-sore and a blight on our forests. Other communities are in the process of burying existing utilities. Chapel Hill should take the first step in that direction by at least prohibiting installation of new above-ground lines.

2/27/2002

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We would be happy to provide any clarification of this petition. We will plan to attend the March 18th council meeting that we understand will cover development ordinance issues.

Thank you for your consideration,

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