



## Duke Power to sell 580 acres

By Caroline Brustad Fossi, and Toya Graham The Herald

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Dave McCauley has lived near the Catawba Nuclear Station on Lake Wylie for five years. But he's not overly concerned about living near the power plant.

What worries him is the fate of 580 acres of wooded land near his lakeside home off Concord Road.

The property is owned by Duke Power, which runs the nuclear station. The company hopes to sell the property -- some of which borders the lake -- to a housing developer by mid-May, a company official said Monday.

McCauley and other residents of the sparsely populated area are concerned about how this development could affect roads, schools, public safety and the environment. A crowd of more than 100 neighbors met with Duke Power officials Monday night to discuss the issue. The meeting was held at Allison Creek Presbyterian Church off S.C. 274.

Under current zoning, up to 1,500 homes could be built on the Duke property if public water and sewer lines were extended to the area, county planning officials say. If wells and septic tanks were installed, about 500 homes could be built.

But the final number of houses is likely to be much lower, county planners say.

A major concern is how additional residents could affect evacuation efforts if there were an accident at the nuclear plant, McCauley said, noting that Concord Road runs along a peninsula. "There's only one way in and one way out," he said before the meeting.

York County Sheriff Bruce Bryant, who attended the meeting, agreed. "The unknown is what is so frightening," he said. "I am very, very concerned any time we have changes in the population that close to a power station, especially nuclear."

About 200 people live within a two-mile radius of the plant -- including the Concord Road area, according to York County Office of Emergency Management estimates.

Valerie Munei, Lake Wylie Lakekeeper, voiced her concerns about water quality. "When you have more developments, especially high-density developments, it's going to affect our drinking water," she said.

The land in question is zoned for residential development and could include homes, apartments or townhouses, according to the York County planning department. The county is revising its long-term plan for growth. The draft version of that plan designates the Concord Road area for houses.

Because no rezoning of the Duke Power land is required, developers must only submit their plans to the county for review. This process does not include a public comment period.

"We want Duke Power to know that we have questions, and we want our questions answered," said Melissa Ames, who has called Concord Road home for six years. "We will continue to keep asking questions. Tonight is just the beginning."

"I wasn't totally happy with what I heard, especially concerning evacuation in the event of an emergency, nuclear and terrorism," she said.

Bill Christian, manager of real estate operations at Duke Power, said while it's unclear who the land owner will be, any deed restrictions on the property will have to be honored.

"You're neighbors to us today, and whatever we do, we want to maintain that," Christian said later.

Sandra Magee, a Duke Power spokeswoman, said last week that the company regularly evaluates its assets, including

land, and decides whether to keep or sell them. "We determined we didn't have the business need for it any more," she said of the Concord Road tract. "We're often disposing of property."

A site appraisal could come as early this week or next week. The company hopes to find a single developer to purchase the property by mid-May. It's more efficient to work with one buyer, Magee said, though the company would be open to other proposals.

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