



MEMORANDUM

Date: January 31, 2020

To: Drew Havens, Town Manager

From: Marty Stone, Assistant Town Manager

Re: Summary of January 23rd Meeting with Lea Island Cove Residents
Electric Operations Facility

At the January 7th meeting of the Town Council, staff was directed to meet with residents living on Lea Island Cove to discuss the potential of constructing an architectural wall along the eastern border of the site to help block the view and reduce possible noise. On January 10th, I emailed the residents living on Lea Island Cove and invited them to a meeting to be held at the Public Works Administration Building on January 23rd from 6 to 7 p.m. At the meeting on January 23rd, Amanda Bunce, Eric Neumann, Dennis Brown, Laurie Hohe, and I met with the owners / residents of 1705, 1711, and 1724 Lea Island Cove. There were 6 adults and 1 child in attendance. Please see attached sign-in sheet for resident information. It should be noted that the 4 residents living at 1717, 1720, 1721, and 1725 Lea Island Cove are renters and they did not attend the meeting. In the email invitation, we had requested that renters let the property owners know of the meeting, but we do not know if the owners were notified or not. We were informed by someone attending the meeting that all the owners of the rental properties are believed to reside outside the United States. In any case, no owners of the rental properties attended.

After brief opening comments and introductions, Laurie Hohe left the meeting as requested by the meeting attendees. I provided an overview of the project and then discussed the potential of constructing a 15' tall architectural wall along the eastern border of the site versus a berm. We explained that the site was not conducive for a berm because its width would impact the natural area proposed between the facility and the residents. We discussed the purpose of the wall, potential for noise reduction, and options for wall finishes. Please see the attached slides shared with the residents.

There was no opposition to the wall; in fact, the residents were generally supportive of the wall concept, but there were some questions and concerns that they wanted to be addressed concerning the wall specifically and the site overall. Below are things (in no particular order) the group wanted more information on, had concerns with, or wanted Town Council to consider in order to make the situation better from their viewpoint. The staff's response to the residents follows the concern and/or question in red.

1. Can a thicker sound wall be constructed?

We received an email on January 29th from Smith-Columbia stating that they no longer are going to be offering the architectural thin wall as they previously recommended. They now only offer a precast concrete sound wall option (typically used along highways) that is approximately three-quarters of an inch thicker than the thin wall and costs approximately \$500,000 to \$560,000 installed. This is assuming no rock will be encountered in setting the piles. More information on precast concrete sound walls can be found at <https://smithmidland.com/smith-columbia-precast-concrete-products/columbia-sound-retaining-walls> and <https://smithmidland.com/sound-wall>.

2. Can the town provide technical data on sound walls?

Please see <https://static.tti.tamu.edu/tti.tamu.edu/documents/166-3.pdf> and https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ENVIRONMENT/noise/noise_barriers/design_construction/design/design03.cfm for technical information on sound walls. Noise reduction resulting from a sound wall is a complex calculation that depends on how close the source of the noise is to the wall, the wall height, density of the wall, the distance on the other side of the wall to the point you're measuring the sound, weather, frequency of sound, etc.; however, one should note that noise **reduction** is generally highest closest to the sound wall as shown below.

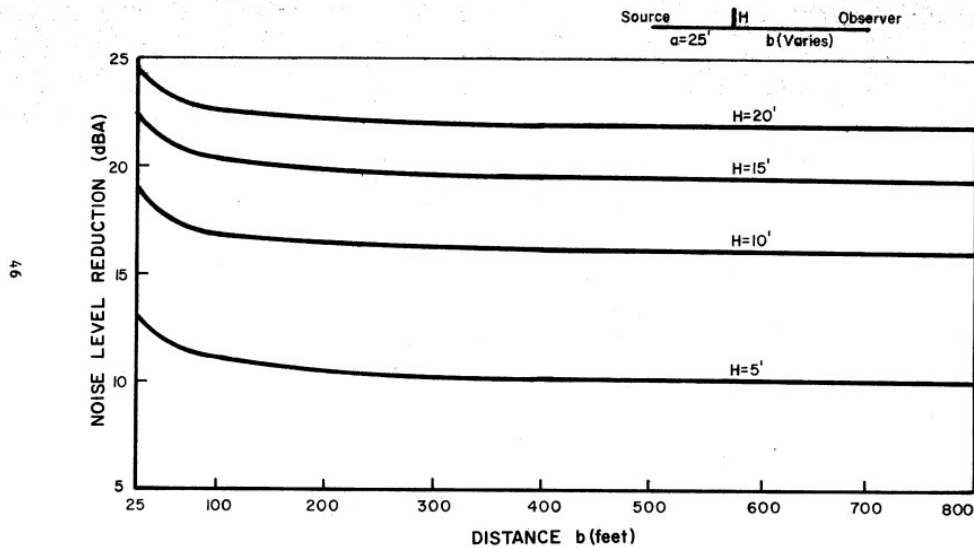


Figure 23. Noise reduction - source to wall distance 25 feet.

3. Residents requested that the dumpster be moved away from the eastern boundary so that they cannot see or smell it.

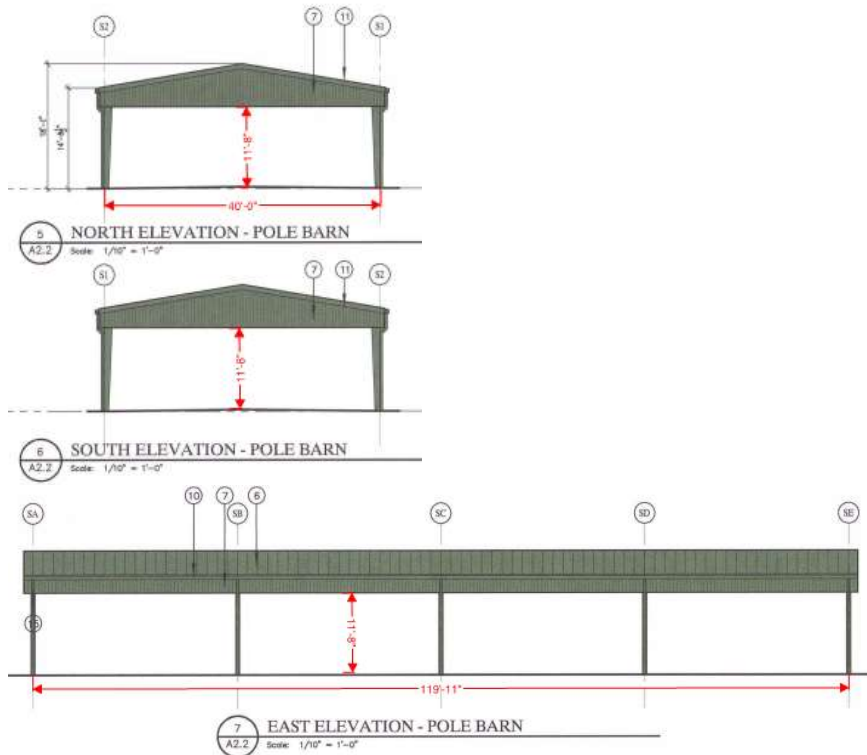
If a sound wall is constructed, the dumpster will not be visible from Lea Island Cove (see below for lines of sight), and as shown above, the sound attenuation will be higher located near the wall versus farther away. As for smell, the dumpsters will be holding office/package trash. The trash is not expected to be any different than what the dumpsters at town hall or the warehouse at public operations contains and there have been no nuisance odors documented.

If there is an odor issue, moving the dumpster across the parking lot will not fix the problem. The town would clean the dumpsters to eliminate an odor problem if one ever developed. For these reasons and for operational purposes, staff recommends leaving the dumpster located as designed if the wall is constructed.

4. Will stop signs be at the exits onto Milano and can the delivery entrance be video monitored?
 Yes, stop signs will be at the exits and staff recommends video monitoring of the delivery entrance.

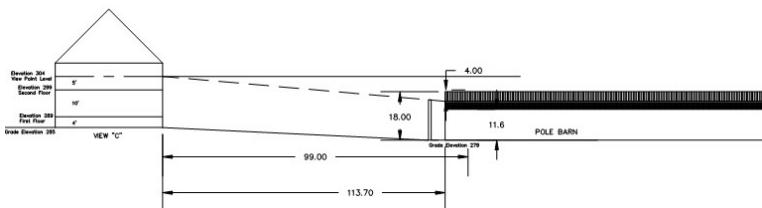
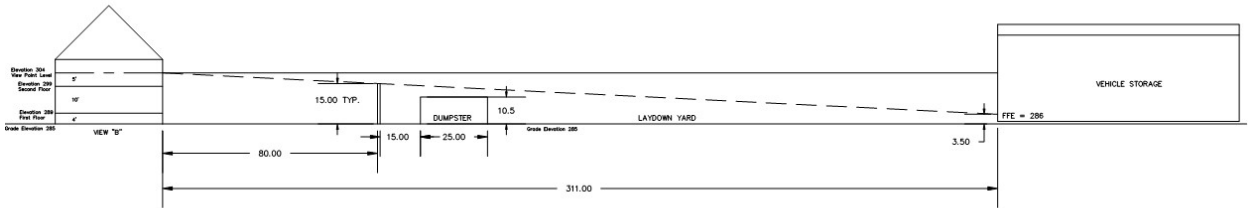
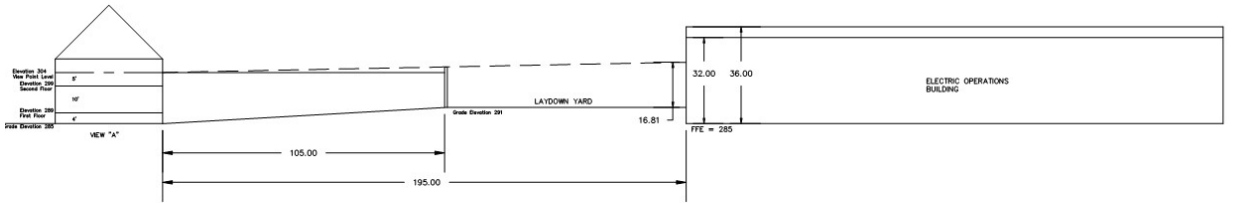
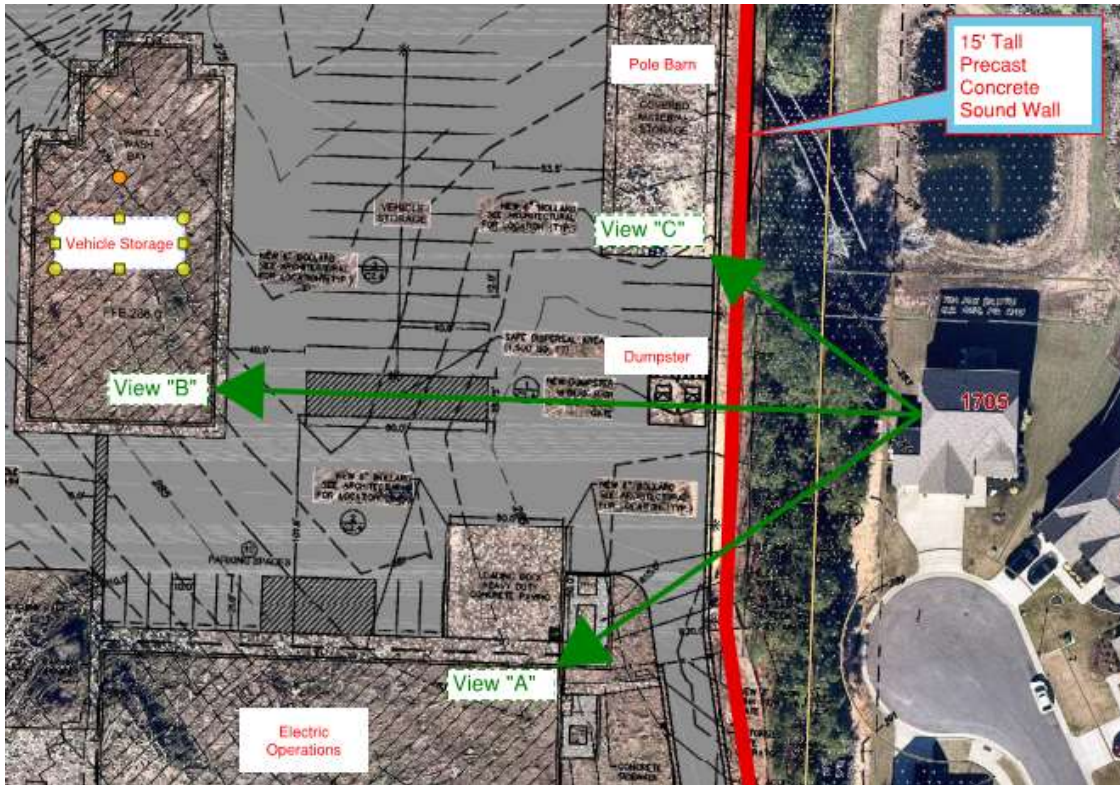
5. Concern that 1705 Lea Island Cove will be able to see the dumpster and inside of the pole building / shelter.

Based on our analysis, the residents of 1705 Lea Island Cove will not be able to see the dumpster or inside the pole barn if a 15' high sound wall is constructed. Please see below for elevations of the pole barn and schematics representing the viewpoint from a window on the second floor based on design grade elevations, estimated first floor elevations, and the viewpoint being 5' above the second-floor elevation.



ELEVATION LEGEND

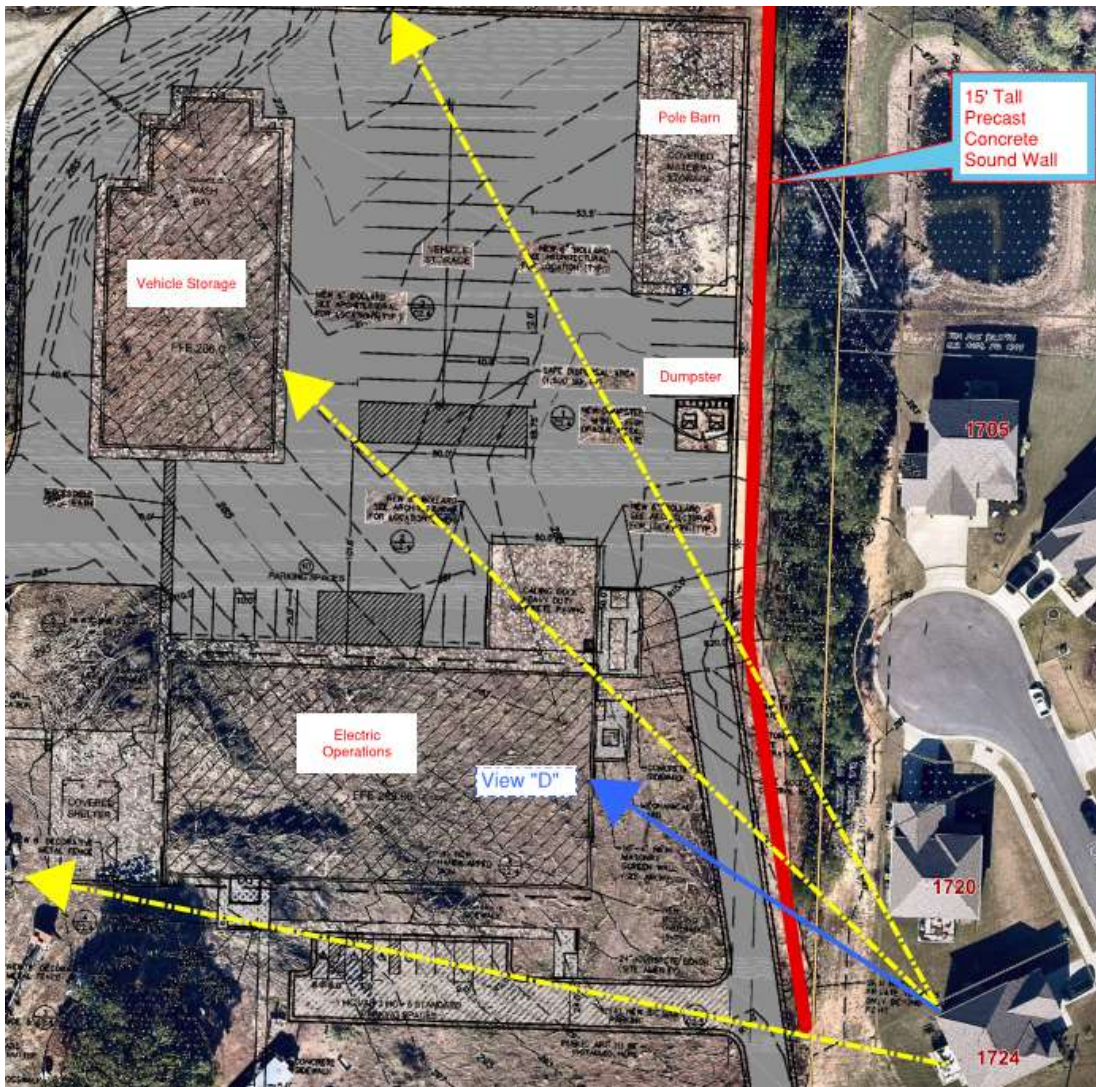
1 FACE BRICK "A" RUNNING BOND	11 PREFINISHED METAL FASCIA PANEL
2 FACE BRICK "A" ROWLOCK COURSE/SILL	12 ALUMINUM BEAM
3 ALUMINUM STOREFRONT	13 SUSPENDED ALUMINUM SCREEN
4 WOOD-TEXTURED CONCRETE COLUMN	14 FACE BRICK "A" DOUBLE SOLDIER LINTEL
5 DECORATIVE ALUMINUM FENCE	15 PREFINISHED METAL DOWNSPOUT
6 2" HIGH STANDING SEAM ROOF	16 INSULATED CEILING SERVICE DOOR
7 METAL WALL PANEL	17 FRP DOOR IN ALUM. STOREFRONT
8 NOT USED	18 PREFINISHED ALUMINUM LOUVER
9 ALUMINUM COLUMN	19 PREFINISHED METAL FLASHING
10 PREFINISHED METAL GUTTER	20 FACE BRICK "A" ROWLOCK CAP



As shown above, the line of sight goes over the top of the dumpster, and the line of sight to the pole barn intersects with the wall panel that extends down from the roof.

- Concern that 1724 Lea Island Cove will be able to see the entire site and kids from neighborhood will not be protected by the wall. More specifically, the resident wants the wall to be extended or a fence to be provided on 1724 Lea Island Cove to prevent kids from being able to leave property and enter into drive of the electric operations facility.

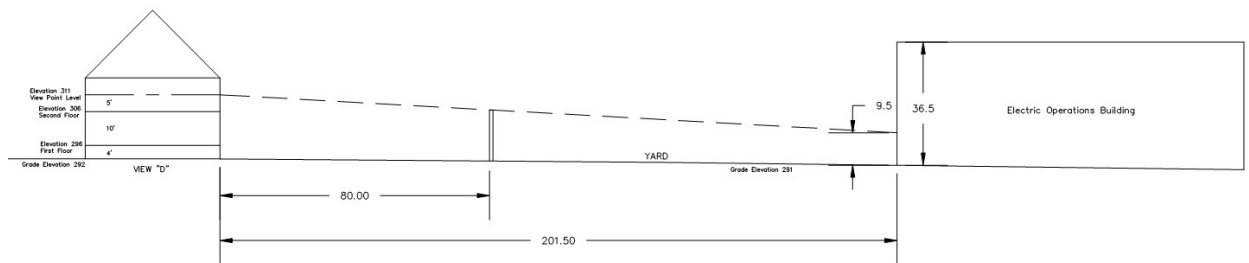
The wall cannot be extended onto the adjacent property owned by the Bella Casa Homeowner's Association (HOA), which has an access easement on it belonging to a third party, without appropriate approvals. The HOA would have to get permission from the parties with an interest in the easement in order for the wall to be extended. More importantly, it does not appear from the schematics below that the residents of 1724 Lea Island Cove will be able to see any objectionable areas of the site as previously identified (i.e., the dumpster and the contents of the pole barn). As for the request for a fence on the property, staff does not recommend constructing a fence on private property.



Based on our analysis, the view from the patio area as represented by the yellow line extending west from the back of the house past the end of the proposed wall does not allow someone to see the operations going on in the rear of the facility.

The 2 yellow lines leaving the north side of the house and extending northwest represent the viewing extents from a window on the second floor based on design grade elevations, estimated first floor elevations, and the viewpoint being 5' above the second-floor elevation. As shown, the view is limited by the electric operations rooftop and the house located at 1720 Lea Island Cove. Neither the dumpster nor the contents of the pole barn are visible from this perspective.

Lastly, view "D" below shows the line of site from the second story window over the wall towards the electric operations building.



7. Concern over sewer service through an existing easement.
Staff committed to clearing the minimum amount of trees/vegetation to construct the sewer service to meet the needs of the site. It should be noted that the easement for the sewer extension was recorded and available for the residents of Lea Island Cove to review prior to purchasing their properties.
8. Residents concerned over deliveries before 8:30 a.m. because of school schedule.
There is no regulatory authority for the town to limit delivery times for businesses; however, the town will request that deliveries be made after 8:30 a.m. when possible.
9. Can the bus stop be moved?
The town will reach out to Wake County Transportation to determine if the bus stop at the southwest corner of Mt. Zion and Milano Avenue needs to be moved to a different location.
10. Residents were upset that Council had what the residents believed to be a closed session to discuss the electric operations facility on January 7.
We explained that the discussion on the electric operations facility was done in a work session that was open to the public.
11. Residents were very upset that they were not informed about the January 7th work session.
We explained that the work session was clearly on the agenda available for the public to review online. Also, we let the residents know that they would not have had the opportunity to talk at the work session as that would have had to been done in public forum.
12. Residents concerned over size of trucks, not traffic related to the facility.
Milano Avenue is designed to handle truck traffic, and the individuals operating the town vehicles are properly licensed for the vehicle class they drive. Staff also explained that the trucks are going to be equipped with GPS units by the time the facility opens that will allow us to confirm our trucks are being operated safely.

13. Residents asked about additional plantings on east side of wall.

The town cannot plant trees on private property and the HOA would need to get approval from parties having an interest in the 30' easement that is adjacent to the town property before planting. The town could possibly supplement some additional plantings in the protected areas if approved by Council. This work would have to be coordinated in the field with planning staff.

In summary, staff believes a sound wall will offer a benefit to the residents on Lea Island Cove. The estimated cost is higher than originally anticipated, but the actual cost will not be known until the wall is designed and costs are received from contractor(s). The residents did not offer a preference on the finish for the wall. It is recommended that our planning department work with the residents to identify a finish that compliments the site. If Council chooses to move forward with a sound wall, staff will need to move quickly to get the wall designed and coordinated with the ongoing construction to minimize change orders caused by time delays, coordination, design changes, etc.

In addition to Council direction on the sound wall, staff needs direction on the following:

- Relocating the dumpster (see items 3, 5, and 6 for information)
- Video monitoring of the delivery entrance (see item 4)
- Extending the sound wall or constructing a privacy fence for 1724 Lea Island Cove (see item 6)
- Providing supplemental plantings within protected area based on field conditions (see item 13)

If there are questions or concerns, please let me know.