



Leon County

Board of County Commissioners

301 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301
(850) 606-5302 www.leoncountyfl.gov

Commissioners

November 25, 2008

BILL PROCTOR
District 1

Mr. Jim Smith, Chairman
Board of Trustees
Florida State University
211 Westcott
Tallahassee, FL 32306

JANE G. SAULS
District 2

JOHN DAILEY
District 3

BRYAN DESLOGE
District 4

Dear Mr. Smith:

BOB RACKLEFF
District 5

CLIFF THAELL
At-Large

AKIN AKINYEMI
At-Large

PARWEZ ALAM
County Administrator

HERBERT W.A. THIELE
County Attorney

I offer this letter after hosting a meeting with the Biomass Gas & Electric officials and over 100 citizens of Leon County. I am very sure the project scheduled to be located at Roberts Avenue should be relocated. Many people of Leon County are frustrated by a closed process that relegates them as spectators to a project they are fearful of and feeling that they have been done totally wrong by Florida State University and the City of Tallahassee. Citizens have been denied an opportunity to be included in the hearing process regarding the Biomass Gas and Electric plant involving the City of Tallahassee, Florida State University and BG&E. Worse, property owners have not been adequately notified or noticed about this 200 million dollar facility that will impact both their health and property values.

The university master plan approval process has disallowed the public input and participation in consideration of the Biomass project to be located in a Southside neighborhood. The biomass plant is hidden like a Trojan horse inside the FSU master plan approval process. Information presented at the public hearing by citizens and circulated to the audience in attendance was interesting and perhaps speculative. The data presented by BG&E was also speculative. It is speculative because no other biomass plant exists in the United States to confirm or validate their projections about the performance of the proposed biomass plant.

The bottom line is clear. Besides conjecture and speculation Biomass Gas and Electric has no evidence to reference the success of its projected ideas. It frightens citizens that no other biomass plant exists using the technology that would be employed at the Roberts Avenue site. As a result, the murmurings of guinea pigs were heard several times across the audience. Indeed, please do not make guinea pigs of southside citizens.

Trustee members, the lives, health and property value of residents of Tallahassee and Leon County deserve greater respect than for a plant of this magnitude be built in a neighborhood. Again, the biomass plant has no track record. The track record that does exist around a once similar model facility in Vermont is shrouded in mystery.

Some citizens said they supported the plant but not at the Roberts Avenue location in the midst of a neighborhood. Others opposed the building of a biomass plant in Leon County, period.

There was extreme opposition to the location of the site at Roberts Avenue. I convey to you the sentiment of the public in requesting that Florida State University vacate plans to locate a biomass facility in the Roberts Avenue area. Please review other

potential locations that will be further away from neighborhoods, public schools, FSU, TCC and FAMU campuses.

Further, it was alleged that the Board of Trustees approved the Roberts Avenue site based on maps which omitted showing you the existence of residential houses surrounding the proposed site. This omission, if accurate, means that the BOT approved a project based on sanitized data. Respectfully, I ask that this matter be confirmed. Citizens are hoping this level of desperation did not exist to manipulate your trust and induce your support for this project. If the map of the site was sanitized of residential properties next door to the biomass site, unless it does not matter at all to you, this should be an evidentiary basis for reconsidering your decision to proceed. Some are now pondering the accuracy of other information presented to you as well.

If a mistake was made in calculating the proximity of homes, residential properties and schools to the biomass site then the calculation of the value of human life should be factored in any equation before unleashing a technology that simply does not exist in any other area in the United States of America. We cannot recapture the negative impacts or consequences of an unknown technology.

The Biomass Gas and Electric Company is receiving a permitting path that no other similarly situated utility entity would receive or could expect. It enjoys advantages such as waivers from normal Planning Department scrutiny, processes and public review standards by being a part of FSU's Master Plan.

This is why I request that the Board of Trustees reconsider its approach to the City's review of your Master Plan by decoupling the biomass project from the University's Master Plan. If you did this it would relieve some of the suspicion and tension surrounding this matter. The public, it appears, believes that a major enterprise like Biomass exceeds a normal campus project. Therefore, this project warrants a real vetting commensurate to the breadth and scope that this commercial enterprise and the industry it represents.

In summation, please note that objections to biomass are based on the 1) science that is unknown or proven; 2) process that is fraught with no public review, participation and input; 3) health concerns related to breathing, diseases; 4) proximity to residences, schools, universities and urban context; 5) conflicts reflecting ..., 6) pollution standards; 7) air permits; 8) environmental racism; 9) Wood quality; and 10 various studies including Kenneth Chay, PhD – UC Berkley Faculty Member.

I have limited comments to what was actually discussed in the bounds of the public meeting from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. on Monday, November 24, 2008 at the Amtrak Community room. Thank you for your consideration of my request and for receiving these summary comments offered at a publicly noticed meeting. I also thank you for honoring each of my (our) requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Proctor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Proctor