

Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

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June 7, 2011

Linda Massey, Chair
Alamance County Board of Commissioners
1522 East Main Street
Mebane, NC 27302

Dear Commissioner Massey:

On behalf of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League Board of Directors and our chapters and members in Alamance County, I write to provide information and to make recommendations regarding the proposed Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance. I write to you now because our members have been alarmed by proposals at the planning board level which would substantially weaken the protections now afforded to Alamance communities.

The Polluting Industries Ordinance adopted in 2006 has served Alamance County well. If adopted in its present form, the new ordinance would endanger public health and erode quality of life. Therefore, our general recommendation is that no new ordinance be adopted that would reduce set-backs of polluting industries from residences, schools, churches, community centers, etc. Any division into categories for polluting industries must not be used to shoehorn in dangerous or undesirable facilities.

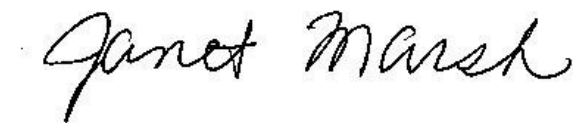
Because of the potential for elimination of steel galvanizing from regulation in the proposed ordinance, we make the following specific recommendations:

1. Steel galvanizing plants should be regulated under the strictest requirements.
2. Because of the soil test results included in the attached report, we ask that Alamance County conduct soil and water testing in the properties adjacent to South Atlantic Steel Galvanizing in Graham.
3. Further, we request that Alamance County support our impending call for state air pollution testing at South Atlantic. (An earlier test conducted by the Winston-Salem Regional Office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources tested only total particulates. The methodology for the test was flawed.)

Please find attached a new report authored by Louis Zeller, our Science Director. In this June 7th report, he details the need for regulation of steel galvanizing facilities.

Commissioner Massey, thank you for your attention to our concerns. We look forward to working with you to protect public health and environmental quality in Alamance County.

Sincerely,



Janet Marsh, Executive Director