

Councilman urges Seabrook to ask that Air Board quash Goodrich

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by MARK TOOHEY
Staff Writer

Seabrook City Councilman Fred King asked council members Tuesday to recommend that the Texas Air Control (TACB) deny a B.F. Goodrich construction permit request claiming the proposed Bayport plant would have a "serious and adverse impact" on the city of Seabrook.

"Construction of such a plant would not be in the best interest of Seabrook and its residents," said King.

The proposed plant would be adjacent to 167 newly developed homes," he added.

King told council members another factor they must consider is the "unexpected."

"Any catastrophe that might happen at the plant will involve all

of Seabrook. This plant will be close to us," he said.

"They (B.F. Goodrich officials) never have told us what will happen if a catastrophe occurs," King added.

The TACB is awaiting a statement from B.F. Goodrich indicating air impact information, according to Ron Holbrook, chairman of the city's planning and zoning commission.

A public hearing on the issuance of the permit will be held after the statement has been submitted.

"B.F. Goodrich must establish the facts and the TACB must take its position," Holbrook said.

Meanwhile, King said he will take a copy of the council's recommendation, along with other pertinent information with him to Austin.

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Air Board Delays Hoescht Decision

The Texas Air Quality Control Board has postponed its decision in the American Hoescht permit case until the latter part of February.

The Board met in Austin on Jan. 9, prepared to deny the petition to rescind the permit granted to the American Hoescht Company in July of 1977 for construction of a facility in the Bayport Complex area.

According to Clark Thompson, representing the Galveston Bay Conservation and Preservation Association (GBCPA), the Board has attempted to push the hearing through without due consideration of objections filed by the Association.

Of a somewhat different opinion was Jim Mathews, staff attorney for the Control Board. According to him there is some question as to whether or not the GBCPA submission was filed on time. The matter was not officially determined at the hearing. However, in an effort to give full consideration, the Board announced the postponement.

"The objections were made on the basis of the Board's ignoring statutory

requirements," said Thompson. The Texas Clean Air Act stipulates that the best available control technology be applied, that land use, priority of location and social and economic value of the source be considered. The GBCPA submission deals with specific examples of where these requirements have not been met.

Mathews cited the Hearing Examiner's Report as the only basis thus far for a change in the Board's original decision to grant the permit. "The report recommended granting the permit with two minor changes," he explained.

The first would be a special provision that the emission rate should not exceed those represented in the original application for permit. The second would stipulate that American Hoescht monitor ambient concentrations of benzene and report the monitorings to the Executive Director of the Air Control Board.

It is the Association's hope that the Board would not grant, and will in this case rescind any permit to a company which fails to meet statutory requirements as set down by the State.

CC: NELSON
BECKER
SPADGE
HOLBROOK
RBD
SOC 1/13/78

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