



INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN-UP SHEET

MEETING DATE
02.19.2025

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Statute 153A-52.1, Henderson County welcomes public comment at its meetings. Please note that each speaker is limited to **three (3) minutes** unless a different time limit is announced by the Board. The Board may also adopt rules limiting the number of persons speaking who are expressing similar viewpoints on a stated issue as well as other rules regarding the maintenance of good order.

Each speaker should be aware, and by their signature hereto agree, that their comments may be recorded (by audio-visual recordings, photography, or other means) and may be (but are not required to be) broadcast by the County as part of the meeting broadcast or as a part of the County's programming on its local video channel(s). By their signature, they further agree that Henderson County is, and will be, the sole owner of all rights in and to such programming. The undersigned hereby indemnifies Henderson County and its employees and agents against any and all claims, damages, liabilities, costs, and expenses arising out of the use of the undersigned person's images and words in connection therewith.

KONNIE HALL

PRINTED NAME

Mailing Address:

4456 FORK CREEK RD.
SALUDA, NC 28773

Konnie Hall

Signature

Topic:

1st Contact Drug Rehab
Facility

Kirk Hall

PRINTED NAME

Mailing Address:

same as above

Kirk Hall

Signature

Topic:

same

PRINTED NAME

Mailing Address:

Signature

Topic:

PRINTED NAME

Mailing Address:

Signature

Topic:

PRINTED NAME

Mailing Address:

Signature

Topic:



6. The zoning administrator informed me that First Contact is operating under Family Care Home rules. Look at Family Care Home rules to determine whether they really qualify to operate as such.
7. Ask hard questions of the director and current and former staff and board members of First Contact.
 - Why didn't you invite the Fork Creek Community to your open house in April 2023? Why did you turn away community members? Were their taxpayer monies used to purchase and upfit your facility?
 - Why did you remove transparency and accountability statements from your website?
 - Have you applied for more grants? Do you inform grantees in your grant applications that you are currently involved in litigation?
 - Did you unlawfully solicit charitable contributions without a NC solicitation license until 2024?
 - Why did you try to place 2 additional buildings on the property which were clearly unauthorized under the SUP?
 - Are there always at least 2 qualified staff on property in case of emergency. Describe "qualified staff".
 - Have participants ever been left without any staff on property? Have they ever been left with only one staff member on the property?
 - What is your screening process for participants. Do any have criminal records? Explain.
 - Do you remember making the statement in the SUP hearings that women who accuse their husbands of assaulting them are making it up? Do you still believe this to be true?
 - Have any participants gone straight from jail to your facility?
 - You have inferred that your participants are "disabled". Who determines this? Is this determined by Social Security, a medical professional? Have any of your participants officially been declared disabled by a recognized organization?
 - Have any current or former staff ever used drugs on or off property while an employee of First Contact.
 - Have any participants gone back to using drugs and have any drugs ever been found on any First Contact property?
 - What are the facts of the man who overdosed at the First Contact transition facility in December 2022 while a resident of the First Contact transition house?
 - What does a typical day look like? What is the daily program? Who runs it and what are their qualifications?
 - What are the requirements to graduate? Who decides? How long is it?
 - How much has been paid out in legal fees? Are taxpayer monies being used for this? If not, who is paying for these?
 - An advertisement was placed in NextDoor offering the services of your participants. Are your rehabilitation participants working in the community? How do you determine they are ready or qualified to be in the community?

These questions just scratch the surface of what should be asked.

Thanks for your time this morning and I hope you will act on the things which you can and should do.

Good morning, Commissioners, and a special welcome to our new Commissioners, Mrs. Franklin and Mr. Egolf. My name is Konnie Hall. My husband Kirk and I own and operate Orchard Lake Campground in the Fork Creek Community of Saluda, NC.

Have any of you ever faced injustice? Our community has as of January 2023 when Henderson County approved an SUP for First Contact Ministries to operate an unlicensed and unsecured men's drug rehab facility in our community. Before the hearings even started, the ZBA Chairman stated, "As stated, this could end up killing that deal. I know that First contact has had a place by Mud Creek that got denied. With what was stated here, this could end up killing this deal for a third time." Then another ZBA member stated, "I'm all for First Addiction Ministries. We need nothing more than what they have to offer in this county, and I would really hate to see this deal die."

The three SUP requirements should have protected us, but they did not. First, the ZBA could not and did not define harmony in a commonsense way. Second, safety and security concerns for our community were disregarded. As an aside, did you know that the main driveway to the First Contact facility was impassable for four days during the January 2025 snowstorm? And third, regarding effect on value the ZBA refused testimony from both our community and a from qualified real estate expert while they accepted "erred" testimony from First Contact's appraiser.

There was one lone ZBA member who expressed concerns about approving the SUP and voted against it in December 2022. I encourage you to seek him out and speak to him and ask him why he was against this location for an unsecured and unlicensed drug rehab facility.

In April 2024, Superior Court Judge Warren appropriately stated in his opinion that the SUP should have been applied for as a mental health facility which would have required licensure instead of an assisted living facility. Therefore, the SUP should be revoked. Unfortunately, this commonsense ruling is subject to a "stay" due to First Contact's appeal to North Carolina Appellate Court. In the brief to the appellate court that was filed last week, the primary argument First Contact is using is that Kirk and I, along with our daughter and two other neighbors, should not have been granted "standing" by Henderson County. You are actively funding an organization that is effectively opposing you. According to our attorneys, this appeal may drag on until 2026. By remaining silent and continuing to fund First Contact with our taxpayer dollars, Henderson County has joined in opposition to the citizens of Fork Creek Community, whom you represent.

My husband, Kirk will now offer a plan of action for you to consider righting these wrongs. Thank you.

What can and should you do?

1. Ask the planning board to make appropriate changes to Henderson County zoning laws as soon as NC Senate Bill 382 is changed or repealed.
2. Read the transcripts and briefs surrounding this case to form your own opinion of the facts.
3. Discontinue all funding of First Contact Ministries. There has been a total of 7 "graduates" out of the residential program. I believe that Henderson County has provided First Contact with \$400-\$500 K for 2023 and 2024. This is over and above the \$2M in NC legislative grants First Contact received. Is this an effective use of yours and my taxpayer dollars?
4. Examine First Contact's 990's and ask for current and past specific financial information.
5. ZBA members asked several times if their decision could be appealed. Educate the ZBA that their decisions have serious consequences for all parties and update them on our case specifically.