

'Minutes prove Teng gave nod to hillslope project'

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By Susan Loone

The DAP has revealed minutes of a meeting which proves that BN leaders had approved a hillslope project above 250 feet, putting down the denials of BN coalition state chief Teng Chang Yeow.

State local government committee chairperson Chow Kon Yeow showed proof of his claim that a project in Relau was approved by the Penang Island Municipal Council (MPPP) when Chang Yeow was a councillor.

Revealing this at a press conference in Penang yesterday, Chow read out all the names of the councillors who had attended the meeting to approve the project, which included Tan Gim Hwa, Chin Fook Weng, Loh Hock Ann, Mohd Ali Ismail and Goh Ban Lee.

He said there were more projects the party would be revealing after compiling enough information.

Chow, the state DAP chief, said Chang Yeow claimed that while he was a Penang municipal councillor he had not approved any hillslope development above 250 feet.

"We are not interested in Chang Yeow, but in what Penang BN had done to approve the said projects," Chow told reporters at a press conference yesterday.

"We did not blame or specify it was Chang Yeow who did it. Why is he trying to wash his hands of the matter?" Chow asked.

"Chang Yeow is trying to draw a line to distance himself from Gerakan president (and former state BN chief) Koh Tsu Koon and the party's state chief Teng Hock Nan," he said.

Koh – now a federal minister - was former Penang chief minister for 18 years prior to 2008, and Teng, was a state executive councillor.

Gerakan's selective memory

Chow was referring to Chang Yeow's comment on Malaysiakini that when he was MPPP councillor from 1992 -1995, no projects above 250 feet had been approved.

The Gerakan secretary general had at the time been invited to sit on the state planning committee sessions during the state exco meetings that oversee the approvals of development projects.

Chang Yeow had also criticised the current state government for blaming the previous administration for several projects approved, and questioned why the MPPP has only declassified documents from 2006 to 2012, and not those since 1985.

Chow slammed Chang Yeow for having "selective memory" when the latter claimed that he could not remember the minutes nor who had sat on the committee that approved several hillslope projects from 1985 to March 2008.

The MPPP has currently declassified minutes of meetings pertaining to hillslope development

from 2006 – 2010 for public viewing in Komtar.

Addressing criticisms against the declassification of the documents, Chow said that those from 1985 could be disclosed in future.

'How can one remember such details?'

In an immediate response, former MPPP councillor Teh Leong Meng said Chow had "selectively failed" to understand that the local council's planning and building standing committee approved 15-20 projects every two weeks.

"It was about 40 projects a month and 480 projects a year. As such after 18 years, how could one possibly remember such details?" Teh, who is Gerakan Local Government Bureau chief, asked.

Teh said Chow has also selectively used 1994 and 1995 minutes which have not been declassified to hit out at Chang Yeow.

He added that Chow had acted "unprofessionally" and his actions lacked "political ethics".

"It is tantamount to tying his opponent's hands in a boxing match and letting a cat bite his opponent from the back so that he can strike a blow on his opponent," he stressed.

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