Board of County Councilors
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For Comprehensive Plan Record  9/8/15

For the 9/8/15 BOCC Hearing, citizen comment period.
Input on the Comprehensive Plan process re the Goals of the Growth Management Act (GMW) related to the proposed Alternatives for the Comprehensive Plan.

Alternative 1 is my preferred Alternative for many reasons. I will only cover one today, as it relates to one Goal of the Growth Management Act.

Goal (8) Natural Resource Industries
Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agriculture and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands (read soils) and productive agricultural lands (read soils), and discourage incompatible uses. For Clark County, this also includes mineral lands, such as gravel mines.

I will start with mineral lands, because that makes a good example of the problems that occur when “discouragement of incompatible uses” has failed. There was opposition to the houses on Livingston Mountain, right on the borders of the mining resource, but the developers and property rights people won. There is now an unfortunate conflict between houses and gravel mining, both mining operations and gravel trucks. Frustration and misery abound. There are reasons for protecting resource lands from encroachment by incompatible uses. (This does not mean that I agree with law-breaking mining operations and law-breaking trucks.)

The same is true of forestry. There is noise and there are trucks. A rural buffer between the active timberlands and houses is important to “quality of life” for both forests and houses. Houses scattered in forest also increase danger of forest fire, which does not protect the forestland. If a wildfire should occur because of a house resident, the forester is not protected from an increase in fire insurance rates and the ratepayer for fire fighting is not protected. Houses do not enhance the forestlands.
The same is true of agriculture, which makes noise early in the morning, puts smells in different directions, depending on the wind, and takes large machines over the roads. Surrounding the farm with houses sets up untenable tension and the farmer stays farming only while he can put up with the complaining. The “right to farm” helps, but the best solution is to give the farm a mostly undeveloped rural land buffer.

Alternative 1 leaves the minimally developed rural buffers on the resource lands. Alternative 4 does not.

That is how one goal of the GMA is affected by two of the Alternatives.

Thank you for allowing my input.

Sydney Reisbick