GROWTH PLAN GOOD TO GO

Majority of Clark County council showed leadership, common sense on issue

In last week's decision by the Clark County council to adopt a 20-year growth management plan, a couple of items stand out from the elongated deliberations.

One is that a majority of the council opted to act in what they think is the best fashion for a majority of Clark County residents. Another is that councilors expressed a desire to balance this public good with the needs of rural landowners. In the end, the board forged a reasonable decision from the wreckage of decades of contentious negotiations.

Most important is that the council, through a series of 3-2 votes with David Moodle and Tom Mielke consistently in opposition, adopted a plan born of a vision for a quickly growing county. There were provisions for a gentler alteration of the county's rural areas, allowing for some smaller lot sizes and for an expansion of urban growth boundaries for some cities.

Increased population will call for increased density throughout the county in order to ease the housing crunch that already is evident.

This approach belies the demagoguery demonstrated by some councilors. In an effort to cater to rural landowners who desire to subdivide their parcels, the councilor unilaterally developed an alternative plan that failed to include such additional roadways, providing scant attention to the need for infrastructure in those areas. The council, along with the county planning board, wisely rejected Mielke's ill-conceived plan while recognizing that all citizens are stakeholders in the issue and should not be beholden to the desires of one small homogeneous group.

Throughout a seven-hour meeting Tuesday that resulted in the final adoption of the plan, Mielke persisted with a childish harangue and said, "What this plan does is, it unnecessarily imposes burdensome restrictions on the citizens. It adds extra regulation, extra red tape. It strips citizens of the private property rights they thought they had." In truth, it gets reasonable land management policies for Clark County’s rural areas. It reminds residents that if they bought a farm, they own a farm, not two dozen 5-acre parcels. It acknowledges that allowing for the division of large properties also would require infrastructural improvements, water service, sewers, and other amenities of civilization.

When a property owner diverts property for the public good, such a project does not happen in a vacuum; it affects the nature of their neighbors, property value.

Meanwhile, the council also recognized the needs of rural landowners. Since the council adopted a resolution for Clark County’s Growth Management Act, many residents have complained that their property rights have been diminished. Olson pledged to revisit rural zoning issues, suggested the creation of a rural lands task force, and recommended granting additional rights for those who have owned property since before 1994. "This isn't going to be the end of the conversations as it relates to rural landowners," she said.

Of course, conversations are not the same as actions. County government should, indeed, pay attention to the concerns of those who have been long-time landowners and have seen their options limited. But in considering additional options, the importance is in catering to the needs of all residents and recognizing that growth affects the entire county.

The Clark County council's vote to adopt a reasoned, well-thought-out land-use plan and wise to respect what would have amounted to an extension of urban sprawl.

EDWARD WRIGHT, Opinion Editor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Letter from influencing our elections with such tactics

Judy Bambrough-Burgess

Broaden focus on candidate choices

Each election season, there are candidates beyond Democrats and Republicans. The Green Party is gaining momentum in this particular race, with Americans interested in other choices. In a May Data Targeting poll, 35 percent said they would vote for an independent challenger to Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in a June ABC News/Washington Post poll, 70 percent viewed Trump unfavorably and 55 percent viewed Clinton unfavorably.

Despite guarantees that the money these candidates have and no media coverage, Green Party candidate Jill Stein is gaining a following. People are tired of entrenched politicians and to some, old-money trading games Stein is gaining a following because she articulates a reasoned, values-based progressive vision with bold solutions to the problems that face this country.

Stein believes politicians should be beholden only to voters, not big-money special interests. This is what the majority of Americans are echoing. Back. Media and other politicians need to listen.

Stein’s campaign is working to get the ballots in all 50 states to give voters another choice in November. If this is a democratic society, the media should take their responsibility past theirNormal of elections. Kelly Kirk

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