

The other side of the story...

There Are No Back-Room Deals

Nationwide, politicians have lively discussions; disagreements are normal. But it's more subdued in Jackson Hole, where measures can pass on 5 to 0 votes with little debate.

Local residents have a variety of opinions, but our electeds tend to be of one mind.

Recently, a town councilor spoke to a local group. He said, "There are no backroom deals" in local politics. Why did he even bring it up?

Maybe it's the 'appearance' of monkey-business that troubled him. Our electeds agree too often.

Maybe they work things out before the meetings, which could violate the Wyoming public meeting law, or maybe they have a 'hidden agenda'?

Voters rejected public-housing in 2016, and 2017. Yet our electeds voted unanimously for a massive public-housing program. Who were they representing? Not voters.

Truth is, our electeds act like 'Club' members. They don't represent voters; they've got their own agenda. The 'Club' follows the Comp Plan as if voters supported it.

The Plan took 5+ years to finish. That's because our electeds, with no planning credentials, did it themselves. Why would 10 people take on a task that not one of them was qualified for?

Maybe they had an outcome in mind to begin with. If they were the planners, they could be sure the Plan came out the way they wanted.

That's why they hand-picked the 'stakeholders' that represented the voters. By cherry-picking the right people, they could be sure they'd get the results they wanted.

They hand-picked a consultant too, and together with the stakeholders they made sure public meetings and public comment was minimized.

If this whole thing smells bad, you're getting it. The Plan was manipulated from the beginning.

Today, our electeds agree so often because they're simply implementing the Comp Plan they created, getting their input from the hand-picked stakeholders they appointed. The public has been ignored for a decade. You don't matter.

The Board of County Commissioners Strategic Plan says their "Mission" is to support "the community's goals as expressed in the Jackson Teton County Comprehensive Plan." They don't represent the voters; they represent 'their' Plan.

That's why when voters reject public housing, politicians approve massive projects anyway.

At SHJH, we could see this coming. So in 2012 we sued town to force a public vote on the Comp Plan. Town fought it hard and spent an estimated \$500,000 of taxpayer money to make sure taxpayers couldn't vote on the Plan.

Look over the 300+ page Comp Plan and you'll see it's a feel-good advertising document. It fails to make the hard choices a real plan makes.

The Plan lets the electeds do what they want, in spite of the voters.

We need new electeds that will represent the people, not the Plan. We need candidates that will stand with the voters, not the 'Club.'

Hopefully we'll see fresh faces run for office. If they run, we could have a livable Jackson Hole. If the 'Club' maintains power, we're sunk.

*There's the appearance
of monkey-business*
