Chatham needs a community based comprehensive land use plan by Sally Kost

Businesses and industries considering locating in a county want to know the county's plans for future developments. The recreation facilities, Chatham cannot currently provide information. Our comprehensive land use plan is most important and misses the most critical aspect of a land use plan - land use plan. Land use decisions made in the Bunkey Morgan era purposely ignored recreation facilities. Chatham cannot currently provide Chatham needs a community based comprehensive land use plan for Chatham's future growth. To make it meaningful, the plan should incorporate other studies and plans, such as the Farmland Preservation plan, the Recreation Master Plan, the Chatham Conservation Plan and input from the schools, the towns and the State Department of Transportation. Moreover, it would have started with a county-wide citizen visioning and input process and encouraged geographically specific local area plans.

Thus, as a practical matter, Chatham County does not have a comprehensive land use plan and map. And welcomed the strength that comes when two forces are working together in shaping the “comprehensive” plan that by Charles Ritter

Sally Kost, Chatham County Commissioner, has played and needs to continue to play a key role in keeping Chatham County ecologically and economically viable. Her county commission position for the development of robust guidelines for fracking in North Carolina is crucial to our maintaining a safe environment to ensure the growth of Chatham County.

The new North Carolina Mining and Energy Commission, established by the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), is tasked with finishing the development of safe guidelines for Hydrogen Fuel Gas (fracking) by 2014, before fracking is allowed to begin.

There are several serious concerns:

- DENR budget has been cut approximately 40% since 2009, and has only recently been given a small amount of additional funding (approximately 20% of total budget).

- The time allowed to develop the guidelines is over 33 percent less than the original estimate by DENR.

- As guidelines, the MEC is using regulations based on regulations from three states that have had some of the worst fracking accidents.

- The Commission is stacked with individuals from the fossil fuel industry, hardly known for its environmental concerns.

- There have been at least 13 states with regulations designed to avoid fracking accidents that have failed to do so, apparently not an easy task.

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Pervere.Carolina.org was launched in August 2012, to further promote the anti-fracking message. A group of citizens who depend on agriculture and are not-for-profit, non-political organization composed of North Carolinians devoted to keeping our water free from toxic chemicals, conserving our water supply and promoting clean energy. After two months of research we attempted to defeat the bill (SB820) that ultimately legalized fracking. We told the governor and the legislature that we care about every single person in our county and that we would not support any legislation that would put our health at risk. We also met with DENR and provided a compilation of the safest guidelines from 31 states. As previously stated the MEC decided to use regulations based on regulations from three states that have had some of the worst fracking accidents.

We also met with a representative of the developer of the 7000+ acre mixed use Chatham Park, to assure them they understand all of the risks associated with fracking. After our efforts we were provided with the full support and involvement of our County Commissioner representative Sally Kost, currently up for reelection and would not have been as successful without her. Each meeting resulted in very positive feedback.

Going forward, we are working with Sally Kost to obtain bipartisan support at the state level to remove the “Halliburton Loophole” that allowsocal governments to be used in fracking fluids that will ultimately contaminate our water, air and soil. This would require modification to the SB820 Bill.

PreserveCarolina.org obtained 7000+ signatures to ban fracking and in actively involved in linking up with other such organizations with similar interests in the support of legislation to keep Chatham County and North Carolina safe.

Re-electing Sally Kost will ensure that these and other efforts continue to ensure the safety of Chatham County residents.

Charles Ritter is active in www.pervere.carolina.org

To the Editor: I’m not a Democrat, I’m not a Republican, an Independent, and I’ve never been an Independent. I’ve researched the issues. I’ve watched the Convenations — no commercials, they upstare me too much. For now my question is: is 2012 the year that’s down to ‘intent’. What is the intent (the platform) of each party (each candidate) and who is it intended to serve? First, plain and square with my heart, mind and soul.

Thirty years ago, my leanings were to the Republican party. I shunned its responsibility and punted it back to the EDC (Economic Development Commission) when I was appointed to the EDC. I want an active and involved community that is involved in developments that are good for the people, who are not being allowed to vote. How does it work at all?...

Sally Kost works to protect environment

Chatham Opinion Line

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by Charles Ritter

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The President has shown that he believes in working together...or trying to. There has been so much criticism that the President hasn’t shown the leadership to create compromise between the two parties — when was the last time you tried to negotiate with a brick wall? I believe that ONE side thought they could completely co-opt the inherited mess in four years (especially when one party publicly VOWS to make you a one-term Presi- dent), while they ignored the other side’s distress. With flip-flop after flip-flop, disregarded us they did. It is my belief that I am here on this earth to serve. So does one party of the President believe “We the People” includes all people. So does the President. I believe that government should not be in my personal business but should be in the business of serving the people, so does the President. I’m going to be guided by my heart and head but not past my. I’m now leaning towards the Democratic platform.

That’s why I am voting to re-elect President Barack Obama.

‘Zeri’ Rheemaker, Chatham County