

Chairman Bruce's Newsletter

10-17-07

I would like to begin my article this week by thanking all of the individuals that the Board of Commissioners selected to coordinate the information gathering regarding land use in Fannin County. Their service is greatly appreciated and, as they decide on meeting dates and times, there are a few results that I hope we obtain from these meetings.

I hope that we are able to gain better knowledge of how long time property owners in Fannin County, both large and small, feel about the idea of a land use plan. As a part of that, I hope that a certain amount of education takes place and it helps citizens understand that, while a land use ordinance does prohibit property owners from doing certain things with or on their property, it does also offer protection to that property owner that does not currently exist.

One other issue that I am curious about is to what extent our property owners understand how land use plans can effect their property values. This works in both ways. While one property owner may be glad a certain area is designated residential, their neighbor might be upset that they cannot sell their land at a potentially higher value as commercial property.

Thrown into this mix is my desire to know more about how Fannin County citizens want to allow for buffers or protection for the many wooded areas and streams our area is blessed with. It is not a simple, straight-forward topic and it will not have a simple or easy answer.

As I mention our area's natural beauty, I am reminded of our current drought situation and the precautions we all need to take. Be extremely careful with even small fires. We are currently under a fire / burning ban in our county but even a small leaf fire that might seem harmless can become a large problem given the dry ground and low humidity we have had. Also, do your best to use water in the best way possible. Several wells and springs have dried up recently causing considerable problems for county citizens. If you are on any city water system, do not hesitate to call their offices to check on any restrictions or conservation measures they may be recommending.

On another note, be extremely careful on the roads this weekend. With our local Harvest Sale beginning and with the Sorghum Festival in Blairsville and the Apple Festival in Ellijay both continuing this weekend, the roads will be very congested with people unfamiliar with the area. Be polite and use caution. We want them to come back and spend money in Fannin County again soon!

Lastly I want to thank the Fannin Sentinel for the opportunity to write these articles and also commend them for their even-handed and issue-neutral journalism. Their headlines are not sensationalist and they serve to give a realistic description of the story that accompanies them without making judgment or giving opinion. They also resist the urge to print gossip, hearsay,

and rumor without appropriate follow-up and fact checking. They leave the editorializing to where it should be; on the editorial and opinion page.

God Bless you all and have a great weekend. Visit www.fannincountyga.org for more county government information and to leave comments for the land use research committee through a link on our home page.

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