

Ralph Elvik's Letter to the Editor of August 12, 2007

“In the Record Courier issue of August 1st, former assemblyman Lynn Hettrick advocated for developers claiming that residential growth pays for itself. I guess that's now his job since he is on the payroll of the Coalition for Smart Growth, a real estate developer organization.

My memory of him is compatible with this current activity for back in 2003 when he was then an assemblyman for this District, he introduced an assembly bill which, if passed, would have virtually emasculated the people's right to use an initiative for zoning/land use planning. Fortunately, and thanks to the efforts of the Sustainable Growth Initiative Committee, his bill was shelved. Which do you feel is the better measure of the man: his biased support of a few developers or working in support and interest of the majority of the citizens of Douglas County?

I believe that large Douglas County developers and some real estate people have contributed to the downfall of real estate activity in Douglas County. Although a national phenomena, these people participated in bringing about the downfall of the housing market by overbuilding with increasingly higher prices and likely questionable financing practices. A more moderate building schedule could have helped to mitigate this result. Some of our present and former county commissioners bear a portion of the responsibility. The question is: why didn't those commissioners respect the majority of the county citizens who told them to slow down the rate of residential growth?

On the matter of our airport: last winter at a meeting on the future of our airport, I felt that Commissioners Baushke and McDermid expressed a favorable attitude for continuing our small airport for the benefit of local aviation. This later resulted in the passage of a Resolution (unanimously) to the effect that the airport should adequately serve local light aircraft and the sports aviation community. Now, either the county manager, the airport manager or some of the County Commissioners (I don't know which) are supporting a dramatic shift towards Bizjets to the detriment of the traditional light aviation. Why is this?

I feel that the best interests of the majority of the Douglas County citizens would be served if we avoid a major increase in negative environmental impacts at our airport – that means implementing the Commissioners' Resolution. To do less would be insubordination by County Staff and the Airport Advisory Committee.”