

Testimony of - - - - - Perry Ronning

Zoning Administrator/Floodplain Administrator
Road Supervisor of Stanley Township

1-23-2008

ACIR Meeting
Fargo City Hall

Testimony for the Advisory Commission

I would like to speak on behalf of the residents and also Stanley Township Board. There have been many concerns by taxpayers of Stanley Township in regards to Annexation and Extraterritorial expansion. I will speak on behalf of the annexation of sections 5 & 6 which started in approximately 2002. The City of Horace and the taxpayers have spent many thousands of dollars for what should be Horace's Annexation. Why does the larger city get to do a process such as this? Taxpayers of Stanley Township asked to be annexed to the City of Horace to avoid getting taken in by the City of Fargo. Fargo does not seem to get the fact that these were people that were living in the City of Fargo at one time. This to me is a total abuse of power by the City.

I would like to also talk about the ribbon annexation by the City of Fargo in the last 2 years. Stanley Township would like to ask the Planning Commission how they consider this good planning to take a 100ft strip of land to 136th Ave? Also, what services are they going to offer to these taxpayers of that land? I do know that there were no written agreements about services with Stanley Township or the City of Horace.

Stanley Township was told at a public meeting that this annexation was only to take away control of Floodplain Management by City of Fargo Staff. I went to Pleasant Township E-T meeting and they were told it was the economic growth of the area. That seems to Stanley Township to be very conflicting comments.

Then after the annexation process, they went and expanded the E-T area off of that 100ft strip of land. The City of Fargo says that this is only a 2-mile E-T expansion. I would like the ACIR to take a good look at this. The way that I see it is that they City now have about 6 miles of E-T area. Annexation limits are approximately at 64th Ave on both the East and West side of I-29 in Stanley Township by the City of Fargo.

With this type of annexation and E-T expansion there comes many problems for the taxpayers and Stanley Township Board of Supervisors.

As a taxpayer of Cass County I fee that E-T expansion of this type takes away the vote of the people. The City would be in control of what the people can do with there property but cannot vote for these people on the City Commission.

Stanley Township has been very active in zoning and floodplain management for many years. Proof of this is that the ND Township Officers Association has adopted our ordinances to be used as a model for all Townships in the state of North Dakota.

Some of the problems with the City's control is that they have no enforcement of their ordinances in the E-T areas. Stanley Township has commercial operations in an agricultural zoning by the City of Fargo and the City told residents that nothing could be done to correct the violation, but Fargo will stop any growth that the average taxpayer will try to do in the E-T. We also have a business that has tried to get started for the last 2 1/2 years and they City of Fargo has prevented it for no good reason except it is not in City limits. Some of the problems with city zoning are that it does not work for the rural people. City people don't seem to understand why any person would want to live in the rural area. N example of this is animal units or firework businesses or any thing that is not allowed inside city limits. Do you really think that city hall cares about people 14 miles away from city hall? I was told by the City if you don't like the way we do zoning, you need to buy it or move away. Some of the planning meetings are between the hours of 8:00am to 5:00pm. When working people have no time to attend. What an advantage fro the planning commission.

I do believe that we can do better for the people of this state by some corrections in the E-T and annexation laws that are set in place today. Limit E-T expansion except where annexation will take place in the near future. Also, allow the vote of the people on the E-T expansion. Do not allow ribbon annexation for any area.

Stanley Township has had zoning administrators, floodplain administrators, and building inspectors for many years. Also we have a zoning board of 5 members for land development concerns. In 1998 I issued 58 permits, 1999 I issued 39 permits, but in 2007 I issued 6 permits with the cost of homes from \$250,000.00-\$650,000.00 the Township lost several thousands of dollars on permit fees, but we got the road issues, flood issues snow issues and zoning problems brought forth by the City of Fargo.

Stanley Township would like to know what the city will do better for the taxpayers than the staff of the Township. I see nothing but problems since the E-T laws were passed in about 1997.

Let's give the rural property rights back to people not City Hall. Who knows better what they want for their property then the landowners.

Thank you,
Perry Ronning
Stanley Township