

For about an hour or so on Friday(10/27), I had an article up on the site called “My Petition: Stop the CRUD.” It was basically a response to a petition being circulated about the PUD amendment before the town right now. I felt that the language in the justification and the petition statement and the petitioners’ website deserved addressing. I still feel that way. I came on very strong in going after what I knew to be inaccuracies or distortions in the materials. I did so because we have important issues before us and I think the “fight” should be fair and fact-based.

While some people in town know a fair amount about what a PUD is and isn’t, others do not. I was unhappy with such sweeping statements as a PUD will “(destroy) Southern Pines” and that a PUD district “is incompatible with the unique character of Southern Pines” and the Council “is fast-tracking” developer’s plans when those statements are not facts, but seem to be stated as such. Those and other statements and characterizations in different materials published by the same people went, in my opinion, far past merely educating people on facts and instead got into stating opinions as facts.

I think good, healthy debate over the issues is great. People just need to be very careful not to inject opinions into certain factual discussions without giving notice. Development, big or small, can be a very emotional issue to people, especially in a wonderful small town like ours that people care about tremendously. It’s at these times of high emotion that we all need to do our best to stick to the facts and make informed opinions.

I took down the piece because perhaps I spoke more as just an ordinary citizen than as a Councilmember and I understand it can be hard for people to separate the two. As there seemed to be nobody else out there calling for some common sense, reason, and truth on some of these issues, I felt it was my responsibility, if only as a Southern Pines resident, to say something about a perceived wrong. I’m not one to merely sit around hoping for others to step up and do something. This, of course, is one of the main reasons I ran for Council. I encourage people to express their opinions as long as their opinions are labeled as such.

Chris