

Freedom Matters

A Weekly Newsletter

Dane County, Wisconsin

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We are a free people in a republic, under a constitution which limits the powers of government to those necessary to secure the unalienable rights of each person to their life, liberty and property. Yet, when a legislature is in session, no one's life, liberty or property is safe. It's the curse of a democracy. That's why we have a republic instead. *Freedom Matters* dedicates itself to the fight to restore our republic. Most of the press and courts fail to do so. They've forgotten that freedom matters.

Land Use Planning: Trojan Horse for Socialism

By Mike Byrne

Many of the concerns shared with the staff at *Freedom Matters* from around the country are one way or another related to a basic right many Americans have forgotten that we should enjoy. **We are talking about the choice to build a dwelling on your property in the location that suits you.** Once taken for granted, this right has been transformed into a kind of privilege, a choice that is not only yours but now also your neighbors'.

There are possibly some rationale nearly everyone would accept to regulate house siting in a dense urban setting, because things like sanitation, fire safety, and even noise are valid considerations of mutual concern, but **in a rural environment the siting of a house should not even be an issue.** Alas, it is not so in more and more areas of Dane County.

Ownership of the horizon?

The concept of "viewshed" has become something almost sacred to certain people, and they are going to great lengths to protect their own, in spite of the fact that they are by definition living in a dwelling that "ruined" someone else's. To us it is **HIGHLY IRONIC!**

But ironic twists of perspective have become quite "normal" and tolerated of late. So when these nice folks can't convince people moving to the country to respect viewsheds they **turn to government to do it for them.**

Government is happy to help...

Government has a number of weapons in its arsenal for these purposes, ranging from harsh ones such as zoning prohibitions to subtle ones such as tax incentives or easements dedicated to specific purposes.

No matter what the strategy government uses, **the end result is what matters to us. That is, government telling citizens where they can live. That is in no uncertain terms a socialistic concept.** History shows that it simply doesn't work. History also shows that to enforce such a system invites repression. Repression, in turn, sometimes leads to catastrophic results.

Is there hope?

In America, the hope is that any action taken by government that is not popularly supported is reversible through the democratic process. Unfortunately, clever politicians have built in safeguards against making changes a simple matter of voting.

Dane County is now at a watershed moment. A number of townships are actively planning (some with assistance from professional planners) to comply with the state laws we call **smart growth.**

It is interesting to note, for example, that all the townships along Highway 12 are planning with the assistance of a company called Vandewalle & Associates. The plans are remarkably similar, particularly with the inclusion of certain key phrases.

Its late at night in the capitol and there's a need for vigilance...Do you know where your legislator is?

One of the most alarming phrases cropping up is the term "environmental corridor." We suggest you download from the Wisconsin State Legislature **Senate Bill 209.** This bill mandates the mapping of upland environmental corridors, seeking to protect wildlife. Some environmentalists have recommended these corridors be up to one mile wide! This could lead to further problems...

The language of the land use plan in the township of Berry, for example, suggests that building will be prohibited in the environmental corridors. Imagine what that will do to property values in or immediately around those corridors. We have already seen that areas deemed wetlands, steep slopes, or hilltops have been declared off limits. Now the "environmental corridors" as well?

As of this writing, the language in the Berry plan is in draft form. On Monday, January 29th at 7:30pm, there will be a public meeting at the town hall in Berry to get citizen reaction.

This Berry board has impressed us with its calm and respectful approach to property rights. We trust cooler heads will prevail and the land use plan revised accordingly.

Readers' Bulletin Board. e-mail us your comments. Include your name, for publication by *Freedom Matters*

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