

Vote to reclaim our Village for the residents of Winfield

I am proudly voting for Rudy Czech for Village President, Christine Petitti, Jack Bajor and Joel Kunesch for Village Trustee.

Early last year I received a certified letter in my mailbox. It was from the Village of Winfield inviting me to attend a Village meeting in regard to the development of a nearby property. This was my first visit to our Village Hall. I honestly attended this meeting without any preconceived ideas about the proposed development. I also had not formed any opinions about any of the elected officials, whom I had never met and whose names I barely recognized. Well that has all changed. Over one year later I'd like to tell you what I've seen, heard and witnessed at our Village Hall.

I've seen some of our elected officials yell at, embarrass, degrade and intimidate residents. These are polite, concerned residents that do not deserve this treatment. I've met residents that are afraid to speak up at Village Hall because they fear they will be publicly humiliated and berated by some of our Trustees. When I was concerned about the possibility of a 12+foot vertical wall being constructed in a ravine across the street from my home I was told that I "should watch my kids" and that if I didn't like the proposed development I should have "bought the property myself".

I've seen residents jump through hoops to obtain a minor variance for a room addition only to be rejected. I've seen developers rezone property and receive over 10 variances on a single development. I even witnessed a developer demand that a special meeting be called to address his project and to my surprise the meeting was immediately granted. In my opinion, I've seen an abuse of the PUD ordinance. It seems that if you don't like the way a piece of property is zoned you just call it a PUD and build whatever you want.

I've noticed seats on various Commissions remain unfilled for months on end, despite the fact that residents are willing to fill these positions. Our Village Board created a new zoning called R7 that allows for buildings to be constructed an unprecedented 5 stories tall and I wonder why this new zoning classification was never reviewed or presented to the Zoning Commission? I've seen Village staff members and consultants that appear to be walking on eggshells and I suspect that they fear they will lose their job if they say anything that is contrary to what some of our Village Board members want to hear. How many Clerks have we had in the last 2 years? I've lost track. Why did our Village Manager, Jeff Moline, really leave Winfield? Why did the Police Chief resign? Week after week I look at an agenda that is clearly dominated by one specific developer and I wonder if this happens in other municipalities.

I watched our Village Attorney advise our Board that they could vote to terminate the right of a resident to video record a Village Board meeting. Some of our elected officials actually voted to terminate the rights of this citizen. This was a clear violation of the Open Meetings Act.

I've read that many of our elected officials have received campaign funds from developers and builders and I wonder how fair and unbiased they truly are able to be when these same builders and developers request re-zoning and variances for their projects. I've also noticed that some of our Village Board members appear to be a personal friend with a specific developer and again I questions, how fair and unbiased are they really able to be when voting on his projects?

I watched some members of our Village Board try to squeeze every bit of profit out of our local train station coffee vendor because "we need every dollar we can get". Yet, at the same time no one at Village Hall seemed to notice or care about the \$60, 000+ in unpaid water bills. What about the uncollected impact fees? How much did our Village Board fail to collect in impact fees? They've admitted that they did fail to collect these funds. Everyone is blaming each other for this mistake. This is money that should have been collected for our schools, park district, and library district. They claim that we need all this development to help out our schools and than they don't

bother to actually collect the money! Are they just saying what people want to hear in order to get elected?

When a young boy obtained over 200 signatures to save the Starcliff trees his parents were proud of him for getting involved. Someone from Village Hall found out about this and tried to discourage the boy from presenting his petition to the Board. When over 500 residents voiced their opposition to the Starcliff development one of our Trustees left the meeting early and did not even bother to listen to the mob of concerned resident that packed Village Hall. This didn't stop his from voting in favor of each and every variance that was requested.

I've been labeled anti-development and it's not true. I support development and growth, especially in our Town Center. **I want elected officials that I know will be unbiased and represent the residents of Winfield.** We need a Board that will consider all aspects of development including our ordinances, the comprehensive plan, traffic, parking, storm water management, engineering issues, impact issues, density and more. It can't always be about trying to put as many people as possible in a particular area. I want to see a Village Board of professional, polite, intelligent people that will always treat our residents with respect. I can't wait to vote on

April 5, 2005. I am proudly voting for Rudy Czech for Village President, Christine Petitti, Jack Bajor and Joel Kunesh for Village Trustee. It's time to reclaim our Village for the residents of Winfield.

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Winfield
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