



Loudon County

“New Life brings prosperity and Hope”

To My Fellow Loudon County Voters

Those of you who know me, know that I am not normally involved in local politics. However, I feel this forthcoming local election is one of the most important in recent years. As a long-term resident of Loudon County District 6, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts and frustrations. It appears there are those who want to keep Loudon County back in the 1950's, with zero development, extremely limited fire protection, an Ambulance service that takes over an hour to reach the northern area of district 6, a low achieving school district and with the exception of Loudon County Sheriff's office, limited services. **It is important that you know the policies of those you are voting for and how they affect you.**

I am not going to engage in any form of character assassination which is what I see on a certain local website. Instead, I would like to deal in just facts. I must be one of the larger nonindustrial taxpayers in Loudon County. As such I would like to draw your attention to the following areas of concern.

Fire Protection in district 6:

In short it is basically nonexistent; I am sure those who staff the Loudon County Volunteer Fire and Rescue are fine people, but we need to realize that they are volunteers and most likely have occupations that mean they are not immediately available 24/7. I also presume as a small county service they have limited equipment at any one location. I have tried over the last few years together with the current elected district commissioner, to provide alternative emergency cover. I have worked on this in association with the long running campaign run by a resident in Deerfield subdivision who I am told by a County Commissioner has made himself “persona non grata” at the County Commission through his attempt to create change. After many years of his protestations, nothing has changed so is it now time to **create change?**

In my own case this last year I changed our auto and home insurance to a new insurance Company. They visited our home to do an insurance audit and noticed that we had a “10W” fire insurance rating at our home address. This means we have a hydrant within 1,000 feet which represented the “W” but we were more than five miles from the non-staffed Volunteer Fire Depot on Martel Road, hence the “10”. The insurance Company did some research and found that a new Rural Metro Fire department was located at the Weigel Gas Station adjacent to Choto Road in Knox County and only 2.4 miles away from our home.

They called me and told me that the change could save us nearly \$5,000 on our fire insurance by lowering our risk to a 5W meaning we are less than five miles away from a fully staffed fire department.



Here comes the kicker! A week or so later I received a call from the insurance company saying, "We are sorry, but we will need to put you back to a 10W fire rating, I asked why? "We called Rural Metro and asked them if they would attend a fire at your home. They replied yes of course if we were asked by Loudon County Volunteer Fire and Rescue". The Lady then continued to say she then **called the said Loudon County Department, and their reply was "yes but only after we arrive on site and find we cannot cope"**! Of course, one's house has burnt down by then justifying what I have heard many times, "they arrive to stop your neighbor's house burning down".

When we built our home in 2001, we contracted with Rural Metro for around six years, then we received a letter saying they were no longer allowed to offer fire protection in Loudon County Tennessee. There are various stories about how this came about but of course it was most likely a political decision by someone who has more power than they should on the County Commission.

In the last two years we have seen a home burnt to the ground in Deerfield Subdivision, and a recent major fire in the Loudon County section of Tanglewood. When will property owners in District 6 be able to secure fire protection for their most valuable asset and of course most importantly protection for one's family? Therefore, we have to **vote for change** now, not only in district 6 but those in district 5 must also show that democracy wins!

The "Children Not Welcome" Policy.

I was recently told by our currently elected commissioner that another elected member of the County Commission was working on a "paper" to present to the County Commission that will profile and limit the type of development they wish to impose in Loudon County. The conversation went along these lines. "It costs us on average \$9,000 a year to educate a child in the County School System. The average annual tax on a home in the County is around \$700. This means it takes the taxes from around thirteen homes just to educate one child. I was told the conclusion of the paper was that the types of homes to be built in Loudon County should be profiled to ones for retirees where there will be no children to educate. I was given Tellico Village as an example where retirees come in from, say Michigan, and spend tax dollars but have no children to educate. The other example was homes on five acre lots where any children would go to fee paying schools such as Webb in Knox County.

This policy suggested to me the makings of a dying County, one that does not want to progress, does not want more homes for normal families, and where they are no longer growing young talent for the future. With the recent appalling events in Ukraine, I heard a good message for Loudon County, it said "New Life brings prosperity and Hope". I think that Loudon County Commission should think hard on this before they kill the opportunity for young life in the County.



New Development:

The election appears to be driven by those in the County Commission that **do not** want to see any development anywhere or if they do then homes on huge lots, not homes for the average person and definitely no children. As I have been told by many developers, with the East Tennessee topography, the need to add roads and much increased construction costs one cannot economically construct residences that the average population can afford, and where they all end up on one acre or more lots. As it has been said by another County Commissioner not everyone wants or can afford to reside on large lots. Yes, there are a lot of large green tracts in the county, unfortunately as landowners "die off" or retire there are not any "gentlemen Farmers" left to buy the land, their children inevitably want nothing to do with the land. The taxes are still expected to be paid. Taxes at Death are still levied by the IRS. However, the IRS want cash not land. The cost of labor, equipment, and fertilizers of which this area needs plenty makes farming in this area an uneconomic proposition.

To grow commercial businesses that produce the higher level of taxes in the County, the enterprises need customers and staff to run their operations. We need a balance of housing types to attract young skilled workers. This can be facilitated by careful planning. As I was told in business, you cannot stand still, you either grow or retract. In this instance with current development policies, we appear to reside in a dying County and as such in the process of retracting.

My wife and I sincerely regret our investment in this backward County.

I ask that you truly know what and who you are voting for on May 3! To see progressive change to a more professionally managed community with necessary services for modern living needs I am Endorsing Mark Matlock and Eddie Simpson please use your vote responsibly!

Alan K. Sefton

Managing Partner.

