



The Siege of Hot Springs Village

Description

[Lloyd Sherman](#), November 17, 2019

Declared candidate for the 2020 POA Board of Directors

Following up on the extremely well-written and accurate document penned by Terri Jackson, I would like to add my voice and echo her assessment of what has happened to the administration of Hot Springs Village. For those who may not have seen this excellent piece from an ex-board member, take a few minutes to read it now.

[Click here to read "Where has our Village Gone," by Teri Jackson.](#)

Some POA members continue to doubt that anything has really happened. But between the oath that board members are required to take supporting not only the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) but the "organization", combined with all the changes to bylaws, policies, and procedures, the board members have been beaten into submission. If they choose to take exception to the NEW policies and procedures that have been put in place, they are threatened with, or actually removed from the board. If they point out issues that need to be addressed, the same thing happens to them. If it is PERCEIVED they are interfering with the CEO's ability to perform her job, they are also singled out. Combine all of this with the hooks intentionally placed in the CEO's contract to ensure control remains with the POA management, and you have the perfect storm.



There has been much controversy over why and what has created the environment we find ourselves in today, but regardless of what the rationale is, we have arrived at a critical point in our history.

It has been my opinion that the initial turning point which woke up the property owners, was the introduction and rollout of the CMP. However, I believe the root of the issue goes back further than that and actually coincides with the arrival of David Twiggs and the Savannah Lakes Village plan he brought with him. Twiggs called his plan the “Master Workbook”. Reviewing both Twiggs’ “Master Workbook” and the Savannah Lakes Village plan will give you the very basis of our CMP. The CMP was really nothing more than paying a set of consultants \$500K to provide us a pre-determined, not new, plan which utilizes boilerplate information and it can be found in many projects undertaken by New Urbanists, [Duany Plater-Zyberk](#) (DPZ). However, that is all water under the bridge and we now stand with a question before us. How do the property owners gain back control of the community that they moved here for?

The underlying problems with the CMP don’t have much to do with the detail in it, but rather the overall impact it has on our operations. The CMP signifies a MAJOR shift away from HSVPOA being a

maintenance organization and instead transitioning into a property-development organization. The POA's primary function should be maintenance of the existing infrastructure and amenities. This shift away from maintenance has resulted in the delay of the much-needed renovations for both the Balboa Clubhouse and Golf Course. We cannot currently afford these projects due to a lack of sufficient funds.

We have been told that several courses are following the same path and will be in need of major renovation in the next few years. Exactly what is going to change this picture to allow us to repair Balboa, let alone any of the other deteriorating amenities or infrastructure? That is a complex question and it has several paths that need to be explored. What I can tell you is that focusing many of our management resources toward implementing items within the CMP that can't possibly work in our environment, is not the answer. When your management resources are focused and directed on development, so follows the staff.

The initial focus of the CMP seems to be on a town center concept within HSV. While this concept works in high-density population areas, it doesn't work in a rural environment such as Hot Springs Village. Also having a CMP that looks 30 years into the future is a worthless exercise. Planning five years out is closing in on pipe dreams.



Midtown Bryant, AR, New Urban Town Center (photo courtesy of Tom and Monica Impellizzeri)

However, every time we turn around these days, we are confronted with issues that revolve around a 30-year CMP PLANNING TOOL. Even to the extent of moving this evolving document in as a

governing document and requiring all committees and board members to concentrate their thoughts and actions around this evolving document is a prime example of the “controlled state” we now find ourselves in.

So, in addition to the bylaws, policies, and procedures that need to be realigned to remove the constraints, I insist that management’s focus be returned to that of a maintenance organization.

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Date Created

11/17/2019

Author

lynn
