

BoCo General Public Comment

Thursday, July 6, 2023

To the Boulder County Commissioners and the Boulder County Public:

Let me be clear. Every single one of the three Boulder County commissioners and every single county employee sits where they do because they really, really decided that they wanted to be a public servant and deliberately chose to be exactly where they are after jumping through several hoops. When it comes to their official actions, I don't care one iota about their personal feelings, and neither should anyone else. I don't care if every single one of them believes themselves above reproach, smug in their convictions and contemptuous of anyone who dares ask point out how they have been abusing their authority, insulting the very people who pay their salaries, violating our constitution rights to speech, property, and privacy, and generally acting like they are above the law. This is not the attitude one wants, expects, or deserves in a public servant – with living, walking, breathing conflict-of-interest and poster boy for misconduct County Attorney Ben Pearlman as Exhibit A.

What all of us should care most about now is ethics reform, holding you to exactly the same standards as any other state or federal employee (having been one myself – repeatedly) whether you like it or not. That change will presumably never come from within the county. It will need to come from the citizens, taxpayers, and property owners of Boulder County who have finally had enough.

For sixty years I've witnessed endless examples of Boulder County's overreach, extremism, fraud, waste, abuse, violation of citizen's rights, and general contempt for the people who pay their salaries. The county has treated democracy and due process as some kind of a la carte menu from which you can pick and choose the bits you like, and send the rest back to the kitchen to be thrown away. Boulder County seems to have forgotten, if it ever knew, that democracy means that our rights are sacrosanct and may not be infringed without compelling public interest AND due process. I repeat – compelling public interest AND due process.

The abject failure of Boulder County to even think about actually enforcing the hundreds, possibly thousands, of stupid, overreacting, pompous, and effectively unenforceable edicts, proclamations, rules, regulations, laws, codes, findings, and whatever that technically exist on the books has also effectively destroyed any respect for the rule of law in Boulder County generally. It is not only likely, but nearly certain that every single resident, property owner, or taxpayer in Boulder County is violating something at least once every year if not every month, week, or day.

Boulder County wasted four years of irrecoverable time and (by my estimate, given in detail previously) between one and two million dollars of irrecoverable taxpayer money on a short term rental policy that accomplished absolutely nothing of value, but did result in lost opportunity, lost time, wasted money, furious homeowners, destruction of many Boulder County commissioner and staff reputations, and ruin of trust in the county's ability to prioritize and have good judgement about anything.

Over the past three years with the STR issue in particular, the patronizing tone and the sense of entitlement revealed by your words and actions was pathetic – a textbook example of how not to solve a (perceived) problem, and how not to be a decent neighbor.

Repealing the current STR rules – or at the very least replacing them with an eminently reasonable, very modest, very inexpensive, private and non-invasive licensing

requirement – is merely a necessary but not sufficient first step in rebuilding the public trust you have squandered over the last few years.

With your extraordinarily vicious, mean-spirited STR rules, you unfairly, unethically, and almost certainly illegally moved property-rights goal posts, under false pretenses no less, for no other reasons than ideology and vindictiveness – with a bit of nasty, behind-the-curtain racism thrown in.

On October 13, 2022, Matt Jones, Claire Levy, and Martha Lochamin voted unanimously to deny vacation rental application LU-22-0018. Apparently the fact that Victor and Molly Vizzuett (526 Braeside Road, Highland Park, IL, 60035, telephone 773-683-0014, email address vizzuettv@gmail.com – all public information as a result of their application) are Hispanic and were denounced by several white, not-in-MY-backyard neighbors during a humiliating public comment process was more relevant than the fact that the Vizzuett's application was in full and complete compliance with every requirement in BOTH the Land Use Code and the STR licensing ordinance and BOTH the county's own Planning Commission and Planning & Permitting Department had recommended approval.

Stop insulting the public's intelligence by denying any of these facts, which are simply a matter of historical record and have mountains of evidence to support them.

Stop simply ignoring citizens' denunciations – your go-to tactic over the last several decades at least.

And stop playing "whatabout-ism" by changing the topic to the one or two sort-of positive things you might do in a year. A broken clock is correct twice a day, and if there was ever something broken, you're it.

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