

How Did We Come to This Point?

by Ann West

After attending this month's ZBA meeting, I was left with a sense of sadness. The meeting was marred with confusion and procedural challenges unfamiliar to the ZBA board and baffling those in attendance. There appeared to be a disconnect between the City, the ZBA and the interested parties to the appeal. The lack of organization led to a confusing, sometimes humorous but mostly disappointing meeting. How did we come to this point?

Many factors came to mind. However, the inadequacy of our outdated zoning ordinances given when they were adopted seems to be at the root of the problem. Our city is still growing; therefore we are a different city than when many of these ordinances and regulations were established. Imagine how the definition of safety has changed over the years.. Our ordinances have not kept up with the times. The risk of exposure to silica sand requires today's reality not that of decades past. It is obvious that those responsible for the well-timed review and revision of our zoning ordinances must make doing so a priority. They should investigate and resolve this matter sooner rather than later.

Being a home rule city, our elected representatives are there to focus on the well-being of its citizens, both physically and financially. This charge simply must take precedence over any procedural technicalities that don't allow our leaders to consider the effects of their decisions on those they represent. If the previous ruling stands, the financial future of businesses and the health of our citizens will be sacrificed for the benefit of a single business. Our zoning ordinances were never written to allow such an injustice as this to occur. They should be rewritten to promote harmony in our city by creating an environment where all can live and conduct business safely.

Safety should never be compromised.

As citizens of this prosperous city, we all deserve clarity and speedy action on this matter.