

Public Comments to City Council
September 12, 2013

For the record, my name is Stewart Dale Spencer. After consulting with trusted friends, I decided that the most appropriate way for me to share my opinions as a private citizen at city council meetings, where I also have the privilege and duty to serve as City Secretary, is to utilize the citizen communication portion of the meeting.

It is with the utmost respect for you as a body and for each individual Alderman, who sacrifices his or her time to serve the community, that I share the following thoughts.

When you addressed the community at the general meeting of the Coupland Civic Organization, prior to the election, every single one of you said that you wanted to "Keep Coupland, Coupland," or words to that effect.

Recently, you were discussing the possibility of bringing zoning to Coupland. I respectfully submit that taking such a step would bring significant change to this community in the sense of expanded government control over the lives of Couplanders. Coupland has never had zoning and I am not aware of any major issues within the community that can be traced to the lack of zoning regulations. Since I am a relative newcomer to Coupland, there may be situations of which I am not aware that are relevant to this issue. If that is the case, I beg your indulgence and would appreciate the opportunity to become more fully informed.

Now that Coupland has a city government, it falls to you, as elected representatives of the citizens, to remain vigilant to any threats to the safety and well-being of the general community. Sometimes that means that the general welfare must take priority over that of individual citizens but I recommend using such powers only when the need for such has been clearly established.

It is my belief that existing state and county laws and regulations are sufficient to protect and preserve the safety and well-being of our community. Should a situation arise where those safeguards are demonstrably insufficient, only then -- in my opinion -- would it be appropriate to establish new measures.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about this matter. I have not discussed this issue with anyone else but I suspect that other Couplanders would agree with this position and I would not like to see the community become divided over property rights issues.