

THE DALLAS POST

EDITORIALS

State shouldn't run roughshod over local zoning law

The rules that the rest of us live by don't apply to state government. That absurd state of affairs is illustrated by a situation in Jackson Township, in which a pump house for a new water line to the state prison at Chase violates township zoning codes, but there's nothing local officials can do about it.

The press secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of General Services, which is overseeing the project, said the state has applied for a variance even though it isn't required, because, "We want to be a good neighbor." But good neighbors don't go through transparently meaningless exercises that waste time and money without any chance of changing the outcome.

Municipal officials adopt planning and zoning regulations because they want their community to be attractive and safe. Rules like setbacks — which the pump house violates — exist so that structures aren't piled one atop the other, don't block motorists' vision and accommodate future growth. No one, not even the state or federal governments, should be able to simply ignore the wishes of the community.

There are occasions when a hierarchy of governmental power is necessary or even desirable, but this is not one of them. When it comes to land use, the municipality should hold sway over other interests.

Dallas Twp. must address fund errors

The state Auditor General has pointed out several irregularities in the way Dallas Township has handled state funds and its pension plan. Among the problems were excessive contributions to the plan, participation by township supervisors who also are employees and inadequate financial statements.

The Auditor General's office has made several recommendations to address these issues, some of which may seem picaresque or unnecessary. But it's important that the employees and residents of Dallas Township trust their government; for that reason alone, any possibility of confusion must be eliminated as quickly as possible.

Public officials are held to high standards in the management of taxpayers' money. It is incumbent upon the Dallas Township supervisors to address these issues directly and openly to remove any impression of impropriety.

Is Quayle pro-choice for his own family?

In case you missed it, Vice President Dan Quayle said on Larry King Live July 22 that he was pro-choice. Say what? The second in command in an administration that's on record supporting a constitutional amendment banning abortion is for choice? That's what he said — at least where his own family is concerned.

Here's how it happened. After questioning the Vice President on the administration's abortion stand in general, King asked what Mr. Quayle would do if his own daughter inadvertently became pregnant. He answered that he would discuss the matter with his daughter, see that she was well-counseled, and then, "support her in whatever decision she'd make." Oops! Isn't that essentially what the pro-choice folks want?

This would appear to mean the Vice President wants for his own family what he would deny for everyone else. That would not be unusual or unique to Mr. Quayle. "Politics makes strange bedfellows" remains an accurate phrase, and is one of the factors that led so many people to support Ross Perot's phantom candidacy. People are tired of politicians who profess to believe something only because they find it politically expedient to do so. Many are ready to weigh a candidate's positions — all of them — and choose the one with whom they most closely agree, realizing that a search for perfection will be fruitless.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if in this important election year candidates played it straight, explaining their positions, defending them and accepting the consequences? Now, that would be unique.

Do you agree? Disagree?

Editorials are the opinion of the management of The Dallas Post. We welcome your opinion on contemporary issues in the form of letters to the editor. If you don't write, the community may never hear a contrasting point of view. Send letters to: The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612. Please include your name, address and a daytime phone number so that we may verify authenticity. We do not publish anonymous letters, but will consider withholding the name in exceptional circumstances. We reserve the right to edit for length and grammar.

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Ronald A. Bartzek
Editor and Publisher

Charlotte E. Bartzek
Associate Publisher

Peggy Young
Advertising Acct. Exec.

Eric Foster
Reporter

Paul Rismiller
Production Manager

Grace R. Dove
Reporter

Olga Kostrobala
Classified/typesetting

Jean Hillard
Office Manager

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION
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View of barns from Harris Hill Road

Photo by Charlotte Bartzek

J.W.J.

Can we afford to feed the sacred cow?

By J.W. JOHNSON

Put out to pasture during this presidential election year has been the continuing billions spent by government in this nation's agricultural industry.

Some call it a subsidy-supply problem, and it's prevalent throughout the agricultural community, particularly in the industry closest to us here in northeastern Pennsylvania: dairy farming.

More milk, butter and cheese is being produced today than is physically capable of being consumed in this nation. We have these commodities coming out of our proverbial ears. And then we have almost daily scientific reports about how, through genetic engineering, cows will be able to produce even more.

We are, in fact, providing some \$650 million a year in subsidy to produce milk we don't need.

Not that the dairy industry is the only recipient of taxpayer funded largesse. Wheat, feed grain, rice, cotton and tobacco farmers receive more than \$5 billion a year in subsidy...and all of this without any obvious or compelling need for subsidy to continue.

There is no need for subsidy to insure the continued flow of foodstuffs to market; in fact, it is the minority of the agricultural industry which receives subsidy. Somehow those who produce beef, eggs, chickens, pork and most fruits and vegetables do so without subsidy.

The bottom line problems is that those who receive the subsidy are now addicted to it, and are able to marshal sufficient lobbying efforts to continue the myth that it saves

the family farm.

In 1960 there were more than 1,200 working farms in Wayne County; today there slightly less than 400...so much for farm preservation.

If the intent of subsidy to dairy farmers was to ensure that a necessary and wholesome form of nutrition would always be available—and be available in all areas—then that goal has long since been achieved.

If, however, there was dual goal of ensuring the product availability and keeping the small farmer in business so he or she could then ensure available supply, then the goal has failed.

A reasonable question to ask when pondering the subsidy-supply problem is: Is it a proper role of government to intervene in the free market to insure the survival of any business?

If freedom and the ability to act upon ingenuity-spawned opportunity is the goal, then the answer to that question is no.

However, because government has contributed so much to the problems of business with capital-draining regulation and taxes that end up in, for example, free enterprise killing subsidized housing programs, perhaps it is only fitting that government intervene.

With today's rapid transportation and overabundance of production, there is no longer a need to subsidize milk to ensure its availability; rather, the subsidy keeps some farmers in business, while the corporate farms get rich from tax dollars and, concurrently, are responsible for a majority of the surplus problem.

On one hand you have a steady

growing surplus, largely provided by the corporate farm, which is subsidized along with small farmer. On the other hand, you have the small farmer trying to survive who, in many cases, could not do so without the subsidy. And in 1989, some 60 percent of agricultural subsidy went to the one fourth of farms which are the wealthiest already.

Caught between these two forces is the taxpayer.

Should corporate farms—say those with more than x number of cows, or which produce more than x pounds of milk, lose subsidy?

Or should more emphasis be placed on allowing the marginal farms to go out of business; that is, the farms which continue to receive constant and ill-advised refinancing of low interest government loans (in addition to milk subsidy) while other farmers scrape by, effectively penalized for efficiency?

Or perhaps there should be a national excise tax on all milk to pay for its promotion and reduce the surplus by increasing consumption, both here and around the world?

Or perhaps we can promote increased exports with the demise of communism, and the theoretical dropping of cold war trade barriers.

But to continue these subsidies, while also complaining about government subsidy in other countries making our products less exportable, will cement cartoon character Pogo's place as the ultimate prognosticator because we will continue to meet the enemy, and continue to find the enemy is right there in the mirror.

Centermoreland UMC BBQ and auction is August 7 and 8

The Centermoreland United Methodist Church will be holding its 37th Annual Bar B Que and Auction this year on Friday and Saturday nights, August 7 and 8 with the help of the Dymond Hollow United Methodist Church.

The Chicken Bar B Que dinner will be served both nights from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., adults \$6.50 and children under 12, \$4.50. The auction will start approximately 7 p.m. both nights.

There will be new and used items donated by local business and friends for the auction.

The ladies from the Centermoreland United Methodist Church made a quilt for the auction.

Hillside Dairy Ice Truck will sell ice cream and there will also be a refreshment stand. Young and old will find something special at the small goods stand, and don't forget the delicious homemade bread, pies and other goodies at the bake

sale.

The Jacobs Brothers will present a concert Friday, Aug. 7 at 6:30 p.m. between the dinner and auction. The Jacobs Brothers are young men dedicated to spreading the gospel through music.

"His Quartet" will present a concert Saturday, Aug. 8, starting at 6:30 p.m. They are a local group also dedicated to spreading the gospel through music.

Letters invited

The Dallas Post encourages its readers to share their opinions with the community by writing a letter to the editor. All letters must be signed and include a telephone number so that we may verify their authenticity. We will not publish anonymous letters. Send letters to The Dallas Post, P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612.

Only Yesterday

60 Years Ago - July 29, 1932
KINGSTON TOWNSHIP
PAYS \$8,750 FOR NEW
HIGH SCHOOL SITE

At a special meeting of Kingston Township School District held at Truckville High School, directors accepted the price set by John Kaschenbach for the site of the new high school and ordered a check for \$8,750 drawn in favor of Mr. Kaschenbach.

Widespread criticism is being directed at Luzerne County Republican politicians for their meddling action in dictating who shall have jobs on State and Federal highway construction for the relief of unemployment. Local labor is being discriminated against and refused jobs in preference to political henchmen from Wyoming Valley who are being transported to jobs daily in trucks.

You could get - Onions 5 lbs. 10¢; pink salmon, 3 cans, 25¢; new fancy #1 potatoes, full 15 lb. peck, 21¢; Lifebuoy soap, 4 cakes, 25¢.

50 Years Ago - July 31, 1942
FORMER POST EDITOR
STATIONED AT
INDUCTION CENTER

Howell E. Reese, former editor of the Dallas Post and more recently a publicity man in the Bahama Islands is stationed at the New Cumberland induction center where he will be interviewed on a statewide radio hookup.

In a war message on War Bonds, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States said "Every dime and dollar not vitally needed for absolute necessities should go into War Bonds and Stamps to add to the striking power of our armed forces."

You could get - U.S. #1 potatoes, full 15 lb. peck, 37¢; Camay soap, 3 bars, 20¢; onions, 3 lbs. 10¢; Legs o lamb, 35¢ lb.

40 Years Ago - Aug. 1, 1952

DR. SHERMAN R.
SCHOOLEY DIES WHILE
CALLING ON PATIENT

Dr. Sherman R. Schooley, 53, family physician, native son and member of a pioneer Back Mountain family died Tuesday in Wilkes-Barre General Hospital where he had been chief of obstetrics for many years. He was stricken with a heart attack while calling on a patient, July 12, during the progress of the Library Auction. He had looked forward with anticipation to the auction that night.

Back Mountain All Stars lost their hopes of being entered in the Little League World Series when they were defeated 4-3 by St. Therese's All Stars of Wilkes-Barre. A win would have meant a chance to play Plymouth for District 2 Championship.

30 Years Ago - Aug. 2, 1962

MIKE WOOD SETS
UNOFFICIAL RECORD
AT GIANTS DESPAIR

Back Mountain All Stars won the Regional Title 10-1. Final Inter-game will be played Friday against Enola All Stars of Cumberland Co. Winner of the game will be pitted against one of three Inter-district Championship teams in an elimination series at Williamsport. Should the Back Mountain All Stars win the State Championship they would play at Tufts College, Medford, Mass. for the Eastern Regional Championship and automatically be entered in the World Series at Williamsport the week of August 20-25.

Mike Wood of Harveys Lake entered his Cooper at Giants Despair where he set an all-time unofficial record of 55.1 seconds at Friday's trials and captured his class on Saturday but did not make his earlier time.

20 Years Ago - Aug. 3, 1972

NESBITT CENTER AT
MISERICORDIA CLOSES

Nesbitt Medical Center located in Alumnae Hall at College Misericordia phased out of operation, Monday as a caravan of local community ambulances returned the Medical Center patients to the hospital's facilities in Kingston. Housed in the girls' dormitory since June 23, when the flood waters forced the evacuation of Nesbitt Memorial Hospital, the medical center has treated over 5,000 emergency patients, admitted over 300 and delivered 52 babies.

Expansion of the present sewer system to certain designated areas were recommended to DAMA by Roy Weston's engineers. Weston's feasibility study recommend that DAMA "proceed with application for HUD grant-in aid and with design and construction of sewer extensions into the following areas: White Birch Trailer Court, Orchard View Terrace, Stonehedge, Powderhorn Drive, West Machell Avenue and Dug-Carverton cross-roads area."