

March 5, 2018

RE: South County Times Article “Surprise P&Z Land Use Workshop Held”

Dear Residents:

I was taken aback by the headline and content of the article, “Surprise P&Z Land Use Workshop Held,” published in the South County Times, March 2-8, 2018 Edition, written by Julie Brown-Patton. After reading it, I was even more astounded that no one from the paper contacted me or City staff to discuss the alleged *facts* before printing the article. As the Mayor of Fenton, I feel that it is necessary to correct what I believe to be inaccuracies in the article.

First, contrary to the article, I want to assure every resident that the City has not yet had a Planning and Zoning meeting to discuss its comprehensive plan and, in fact, has scheduled the public hearing to discuss its comprehensive plan **for this coming Tuesday, March 6, at 7:00 p.m.** A copy of the March 6 agenda is attached.

Second, the February 6 workshop was far from a “surprise.” The City of Fenton works very hard to try to make sure that the public is involved in what the City is doing and this workshop was no exception. If I had been contacted, I could have explained that the workshop had nothing to do with the comprehensive plan and that this workshop had in fact been scheduled and announced at a Board of Aldermen Committee meeting *before* the Board even directed the Commission to review the comprehensive plan. I could have further provided you with the agenda for this workshop that would have made it clear this workshop’s purpose was to continue its running discussion regarding “amendments to the Zoning Code pertaining to allowable uses and uses allowed by Special Use Permit in the Olde Towne, Commercial, and Business Zoned Districts and related definitions.” A copy of the February 6 agenda is attached. Finally, I could have pointed out that this February 6 workshop (like all P&Z workshops last year on the same topic) was held in a round table format in a large conference room adjacent to the Council Chambers with door open to the public for anyone wanting to attend.

The City prides itself on serving the residents of Fenton--as do I. Having secret or “surprise” meetings is not how the City of Fenton operates. I look forward to seeing our residents at the scheduled March 6 Planning and Zoning public hearing and to hear their comments to the Commission about the residential section of the City’s comprehensive plan. I only hope that the article does not lead the public to believe that the meeting about the comprehensive plan has already happened, resulting in low attendance.

Based on the above, I will be submitting this letter and supporting documentation to the South County Times to respectfully request that the article be retracted and the facts corrected immediately on the online addition and in the next print Edition.

Sincerely,

Mayor Josh Voyles
City of Fenton