

***Email from Taylor Clement, Mayor of Southern Pines, to Pauline Bruno in response to Pauline's luncheon message regarding growth in Moore County:***

Yes, there's a lot of change happening at once. There are serious growing pains in Moore County and I, too, want more Republicans to step up. We lose municipal elections because many Republicans only vote in national elections. We need local leaders who will follow the law AND hold a hard line. Who abide by our US and NC Constitutional powers. We need candidates **who can balance property rights, understand fiscal responsibility, and work within the legal process**; Republicans are ideal candidates!

Our community leaders can't stop the growth, we can only manage it and we are trying! I can only speak for Southern Pines, but we are constantly walking the fine line of preserving our character, protecting private property rights and managing growth within the powers granted to us by the General Assembly. In the last 4 years we have:

- Approved a new Comprehensive Plan with growth contained to areas which lead to the least impact to traffic, protect our high quality water-shed and avoid sprawl.
- Changed our processes to allow more subjective review of apartments (formerly a quasi-judicial and now legislative).
- Created Conditional Zoning to provide the town with the strongest negotiating power when it comes to design, quality and preservation of green space and trees.
- Attempted to implement Character Districts which demand development to look and feel like it has always been here AND a Tree Preservation Plan -- but next week we will be forced to continue both of those public hearings for the 6th time. It has been almost a full year since our legislature has tied our hands with SB382. And the fight to maintain zoning control of our ETJs is constantly under threat.

We've seen the unintended consequences of too heavy a hand: If we abuse our powers even slightly, the legislature will further strip towns of our zoning rights or remove ETJs for good. In addition, over-constrained growth will cause an increased demand for houses and apartments outside of town - spreading into the county, worsening the traffic, weighing on our town services and not contributing to our tax base. Stopping growth here means it goes somewhere else and rapidly accelerates sprawl into more rural areas. It's another balancing act. We know what that looks like, we've seen it in other communities and it's probably the reason many of us relocated here.

If you think you don't like growth I guarantee you'll like it less when the county implements their updated Comp Plan with pocket communities. It's still density and growth but further from the schools, churches, grocery stores, shops and events. It's more traffic & less regulation on design.