

Remarks Prepared For Sandy Chamber of Commerce Meeting by Gary T. Forbush

I'd like to start off by thanking the Chamber for inviting both Mr Myer and myself to this discussion with Mayor Tom Dolan on the Gravel Pit and the upcoming Citizens Referendum.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the City Council & Mayor for their years of service and the good things that have come to Sandy (like the amphitheatre and Lone Peak Park where I spend time with my family...).

I'd also like to clearly state that I am here, representing myself, as a Sandy citizen and as a candidate for Mayor in Sandy. I want you to know that I am not a one issue candidate. The Gravel Pit is just one of many issues that will come out during the upcoming campaign.

Based on information provided to me by the Chamber, I have focused my research, and will focus my remarks, and respond to your question, on issues relating to the Gravel Pit and the Citizens Referendum.

Now that you've heard the latest about the Boyer Company's planned development, I think it would be wise to get you up-to-date on the Referendum.

Back on July 1, 2005, the ruling by the Utah State Supreme Court clearly stated that the citizens' have a constitutionally guaranteed right to veto legislation proposed by their City Council. The decision signals that the Court will take steps to protect that right, and will not allow the City to undermine it.

There remain two unresolved issues relating to the Citizens Referendum at present:

The first is a "Request For Rehearing" that was filed by the Boyer Company (the developer) and Gibbons & Reed (the current landowner) seeking to overturn the decision of the Court.

The second, filed by the Referendum Sponsors (I am one of five citizen sponsors) and "Save Our Communities", has asked the Court to write the wording of the Citizen Referendum because City leaders have not been willing to reconsider their original ballot submission.

I just found out yesterday that there will be a hearing in front of the State Supreme Court on the wording of the referendum next Wednesday, August 31 @ 11:00am.

For me the referendum is more than just about land-use in the gravel pit. It is ultimately a referendum on the City leadership, and their unwillingness to listen to Sandy citizens when major decisions are made. What started out as 100s of people turning out at the public hearings has now turned into 1000s of people wanting this issue decided by the people, rather than the politicians?

The Citizens of Sandy need to know that the Boyer Company and the Mayor (Tom Dolan) are willing to use Fear, Uncertainty, and Doubt (FUD).

Fear of higher residential property taxes.

Uncertainty as to whether we can say no to their proposed development and still have a reliable source of revenue to provide city services.

And Doubt, questioning the motives of the 6000+ registered voters that signed the Referendum Petition Drive in January 2005.

They will work to sway you to think that this is the best possible thing that can be located in the Gravel Pit. It is not!

Citizens should also be advised that the Boyer Company has several scenarios that could play out in the next few months. They may try and avoid the referendum altogether by buying and then immediately selling the Gravel Pit (to some national companies that have been eyeing it as a great place for apartments). It is important that citizens know this is a "Conditional Use" in the current zoning, not a "Permitted" Use.

If the referendum vote does not go there way, they have also threatened that they may go back to the site at 9400 S and 2000 E to see if they can make that location work again. I think they are saying this to try and fragment the citizenry, so that we work against one another, rather than standing in unity as a single community. Don't believe it!

There are other viable options, even other mixed use developments that will be possible if the citizens say "No" to the zoning change in November.

All I ask of you and other Sandy citizens', is to study the referendum materials, consider the options carefully, and vote. I encourage Sandy citizens for this General Election (November 8, 2005) to be:

More active
More visible

More involved
More civic minded

This is our community, and we all have a stake in making it the best it can be. Our voices should be respected by those we elect to represent us. The outcome of this referendum will either encourage or discourage others who wish to have a voice in the community when major decisions are made regarding their "quality of life".

We should expect that a representative government will listen to the people, especially when the biggest land use decision in twenty years is before them.

I think that big box stores deserve a place in Sandy (but the gravel pit is not that location).

I realize how important sales tax revenue is to providing services (but it is not the only economic development that City leaders should be focusing on).

I think we have focused too much effort on vying for retail (that would normally come our way as a result of the positive demographics we have in Sandy).

If our goal is to pull in as much revenue as possible, I think it would make more sense to place these large retailers on the borders of Sandy, rather than the heart.

The additional sales tax revenue that we derive from the development will, at best, be only incrementally better. Most of it will come by taking revenue from other local retailers.

My recent analysis of Sandy's Total Sales By Area (from the Utah State Tax Commission) for the year ending June 30, 2005 shows that 84% (or \$1,268,408,410 vs 16% or \$241,566,795) of our sales comes either on or west of 7th East.

We have better existing infrastructure already in place there and would have much less impact on the "quality of life" in our neighborhoods if we encourage the big box retailers to focus on or west of 7th East.

I am willing to live with what the citizens decide, rather than what the City council (with the help of the Mayor Tom Dolan) decided back in late November.

Thousands have worked diligently to give the citizens this opportunity to express themselves. I hope we all take advantage of it come November 4.

Thanks for your time and attention!

Gary T. Forbush

Candidate - Sandy Mayor

Referendum Sponsor

Member – Save Our Communities

Sandy Resident

© Forbush For Mayor Campaign

Should wish to contact Gary T. Forbush, you can reach him via:

Mailing address: Forbush For Mayor
 779 E 9400 S # 344
 Sandy, UT 84094

Website: ForbushForChange.com