

Opinion

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THE FARMVILLE HERALD

YOUR VIEWS I

Rights based ordinance is viable

Dear Editor,

After learning about the many communities that have been prevented from protecting themselves through zoning law because of corporate pressure, I felt a zoning ban on metallic mining was not a viable way to protect our county. It's insane that a community can be sued by corporations for loss of future profits - called the takings clause - an industry friendly, undemocratic court interpretation of the 5th Amendment.

The rights-based ordinance is not a land-use/zoning law. It doesn't propose regulation or banning of metallic mining in Buckingham County; rather it insists we protect the rights of the people and communities here to be free from toxic trespass and to prove it safe first.

It empowers our local elected leaders to do just that. Through the centuries, the courts have unjustly and increasingly empowered private corporations with rights originally meant for humans. Meanwhile, public corporations like our county government, have been left behind, as have we, the people. When communities are forced to give up their health and safety to power and money, our representative form of government is also sacrificed.

Again, the rights-based ordinance will not ban gold mining in Buckingham County, but rather it insists that the rights of the people in this county should not be set aside. It's not a new environmental law, but a civil rights law for all of us.

The rights-based ordinance takes its

authority from:

• 9th Amendment of US Constitution: The rights of the people are not limited to just the rights listed in the Constitution.

• 14th Amendment of US Constitution: No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities (rights) of citizens of the United States

• 5 articles from the VA Constitution
In a memo dated August 2, 2022, Mr. Wright, the county attorney, advised our elected leaders that there was no VA Code giving authority to the rights-based ordinance. But in VA Code 15.2-1102 municipalities are given "permission" and granted general powers "which are necessary or desirable to secure and promote the general welfare of the inhabitants

of the municipality". Here is Virginia law giving authority to Buckingham to pass the rights-based ordinance. Its clear intention is to protect public safety and welfare. (County Attorney) E.M. Wright's memo had no solutions to our problems and was replete with bad advice for the supervisors. I ask for the County Gold Mining Committee to reconvene and to discuss this, which is what I had hoped would happen in the first place. Better yet, I ask Buckingham Supervisors to acknowledge that this Virginia Code gives the rights-based ordinance the legal support the county attorney said it didn't have. Send it to a public hearing and adopt it now!

Frank Schawaller
Buckingham

Think small, not big

Dear Editor,

I read with interest your recent article on Farmville's population and its relationship to attracting big box stores. There was also a story on downtown building vacancies and the push to

have new tenants.

I think it's a proven fact that when big box stores move in, small businesses are impacted. I think Farmville's retail arena would be best served by attracting small locally owned firms. To me it

sends the wrong message to downtown merchants to hear about recruitment efforts toward big box stores.

It seems to me that Farmville is the shopping hub of Southside Virginia except for big Walmart, it has be-

come that due to small businesses. Farmville's retail future may be better served by encouraging small not big.

Bernard Wilkerson
Chesterfield

A return to Mt. Trashmore

Dear Editor,

A Buckingham County concerned citizen did a spot viewing on Google Earth of the growing environmental and health hazard at the 2660 Pattie Road tire mountain. Yes people, just like the seaweed belt on the Atlantic

East Coast seen on Google Earth, the tire mountain is still there in its full glory, perhaps with hundreds of more tires than earlier reported. The mountain grows and grows with rental trucks and trailers coming and going in what seems like a daily event.

Using the "chain of command," media contact reporting, proper state agency notifications, and local supposed responsible supervisors and enforcement officers; the mountain grows. Everybody contacted says, "it is being looked at," maybe they mean

from Google Earth. Nothing appears to change that will legally combat this astonishing growing one-tire-at-a-time plague in our neighborhood

Nelson Bailey
Buckingham

A story about namesakes

I was once told that I was named Michael after my mother's favorite great uncle Mike Omar, who served as Marshal of Lambert, Mississippi for many years.

There is an interesting case file from a 1927 (thus, Prohibition era) lawsuit pertaining to a search he conducted "without probable cause" that turned up four gallons of whiskey after he was awakened in the middle of the night by an unmarked vehicle in his neighborhood. Another Google "hit" includes discussion of his tendency to shoot first and ask questions later. Today there is Mike Omar Drive in that town.

My troubles began in the tenth grade. My name is fairly common, so it is not surprising that there would be two of us in a class of some 600 students. Homeroom assignments and seating were alphabetical, so I (Joseph M.) sat right in front of Michael D. In the back corner of the classroom for three years, and you can imagine

my horror when — at least twice a year — uniformed officers would appear at the classroom door asking to see Mike Wilson. Honestly, I never really got to know him. He perished not long after graduation at a railroad crossing.

The next namesake arrived at Hampden-Sydney College during the wonderful Tony Shaver era in the 80's to play basketball. For a college player, he wasn't especially tall, but he had the most outstanding leaping ability I have ever witnessed in person. If anyone could truly "take a quarter off the top of the backboard and leave 15 cents change," it was Mike. Since I had him in Elementary Spanish, we had some fun with the coincidence.

Not long after I arrived at Catawba as Provost in 1993, a new, misguided, and — I can safely say it now — somewhat dense athletic director decided to raise funds by renting out our gym for a local entrepreneur's "tough man contest" (a precursor of MMA, I believe), in which the



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MIKE WILSON

last brawler standing wins. A colleague was kind enough to save me the clipping from the *Saturday Post* that Sunday declaring my victory; several indicated that they

were previously unaware of my tattoos. And there I was, trying so hard to seem kind and compassionate.

Incidentally, after that fiasco, the AD decided to raise funds by committing our football team to a "money game" against Western Carolina early the next fall that left half the roster seeking medical redshirts.

Google searches of "Mike Wilson" turn up an interesting array of Wall Street financial advisors, dentists, professors, newspaper editors, CEO's, mayors, a Kentucky legislator, a Clemson base-

ball equipment manager, etc. A more refined search, "Mike Wilson criminal" reveals horrifying results: one killed his grandmother, another is a violent drug dealer, and several are registered sex offenders, not to mention the one — sporting the interesting alias "Lucky" — arrested for "possession of a forged instrument." I assume it was a 6-iron.

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To submit a letter to the editor please email Editor@FarmvilleHerald.com

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