

2-19-2022 Email re Trees (gently edited by CityPAC)

Neither public sentiment, common sense, the law, the charter amendment process, nor the courts have been able to rectify the commissioners' constant circumvention of the wishes of the citizens they campaigned to represent.

Having tried every other means to effectuate positive change in our community, it's become clear that my having a seat at the commissioner's table is the best way to give our voters the representation they deserve.

Regarding trees, please read "Give Nature a Seat at the Governing Table," published 1/25/22 at TheHightowerLowdown.org.

It's about William Jackson, who, in 1832, deeded a Grand Oak, and the land upon which it stood, to the tree itself. It's a great story and an educational look at the future of environmental safeguards and protections and gives us a positive direction to channel our efforts.

Recently, an Orlando group, by charter amendment, similarly gave rights to a river, in and of itself. But our legislature reacted quickly, and through statutory preemption precluded local governments from enacting similar measures.

The developers that control our local elected officials have like-minded colleagues throughout the state. They team up to control the legislature, too. As such, many of the protections that most citizens likely view as good local public policy end up being voided by the legislature through statutory preemption. (Like our tree protection ordinance, our ability to regulate short-term rentals in our neighborhoods, etc.)

It's mind-boggling how the party of less government continues to eviscerate the 1973 Municipal Home Rule Powers Act and the 1985 Community Planning Act. Apparently, our big brothers in Tallahassee know what we need better than we do. Or are they just doing the bidding of their donors?