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**Subject:** 8 Dec Stone Haven: Marching to 4,000 More Houses, Ever-Increasing Taxes, Ever-Worsening Services?

**Date:** Sat, 21 Nov 2015 12:04:24 -0500

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## Had Enough Yet?

### PW Roads Now

(already VA's most crowded; 70-mile roundtrip commute to Fairfax Co. = 3-4 hrs/day)



### Future PW Roads

(After Corey Stewart, developers, and their allies build over 4,000 more houses in Linton Hall corridor)



### PW Schools Now

(already VA's most crowded)



### Future PW Schools



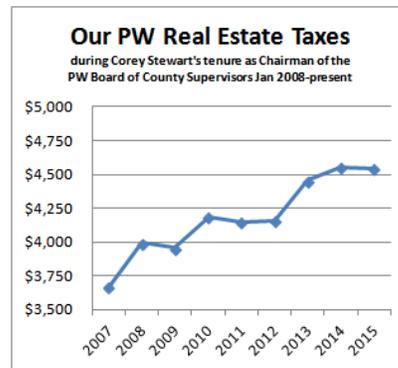
### Property taxes **2007**

- Our home in Braemar along Linton Hall Rd. was valued @ \$120K *more* in 2007 than it is now in 2015, yet our real estate taxes were only \$3,669 in 2007.
- Nov 2007 Corey Stewart-R elected Chairman of PW Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) on the strength of promises to be fiscally conservative, reduce taxes, and control residential growth, noting that "when we approve large developments, we are essentially approving a tax increase." See:   
[http://pwcgbg.org/Stewart\\_ProposedTaxIncreases\\_PoliticalWhiplash.html](http://pwcgbg.org/Stewart_ProposedTaxIncreases_PoliticalWhiplash.html)
- Stewart begins to seek statewide political office, becomes strongly pro-residential development, and consequently raises over \$1M from developers 2008-present. See:   
[http://www.vpap.org/candidates/61061/donors\\_sector\\_totals/](http://www.vpap.org/candidates/61061/donors_sector_totals/)

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<http://pwcgbg.org>

### Property taxes **2015** (up 26.5%)

- In 2015, our real estate taxes are \$4,642, up 26.5% despite low inflation since 2007.



- The quality of county services continues to decline (increasingly overcrowded schools, roads, etc) while taxes go up. Why? Because large residential developments are almost always tax-negative. Incompetence and misuse of funds is the only other logical explanation for dysfunctional county services despite large tax increases. In either case, Chairman Stewart is ultimately responsible.

### **Stone Haven Returns 8 Dec, Just as Bad as Before**

County public notice signs -- the little white signs that are too small to read as you drive by -- went up around the Stone Haven property 20 November afternoon. The signs announce that the Stone Haven vote by the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) will be held 8 December 7:30 pm at the county's McCoart Building in mid-county off the Prince William Parkway @ 1 County Complex Ct, Woodbridge, VA

As you all may recall, on 13 January 2015 a final vote on the big Stone Haven residential development project just south of Jiffy Lube Live was "deferred to date uncertain" as at least 4 of 8 supervisors (Maureen Caddigan, Mike May, Peter Candland, and Jeanine Lawson) expressed their intent to vote against the project, with Frank Principi a possible swing vote against as well. (5 of 8 BOCS votes are needed to approve a proposal.)

Deferring the vote was Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) Chairman Corey Stewart's way of avoiding imminent defeat and buying some time so he and his developer allies could twist one or two more supervisors' arms enough to get them to vote in favor of Stone Haven after the 3 Nov 2015 elections.

PWCBG remains opposed to Stone Haven; nothing of significance has changed in the "new" proposal. The changes that we know of are merely cosmetic: holding back 150 acres (4 homes per acre) from this 1,000-house proposal that could and will be submitted later as a second proposal that will bring the total number of houses -- 1,600 -- right back up to virtually the same level as in 2014.

(Click here for more info on Stone Haven: [http://pwcbg.org/Stonehaven\\_Brentswood2.html](http://pwcbg.org/Stonehaven_Brentswood2.html) )

### **Watch the Dominoes Fall -- At Least 4,000 More Houses**

Even worse, if Stone Haven succeeds, Prince William (PW) Station, whose owners are closely watching the Stone Haven fight, is next and will likely bring another 2,000 houses. (PW Station is just north of Stone Haven.) Pioneer Assemblage to the south would add another ~450 houses.

So watch the dominoes fall if Stone Haven wins. This is really not only about 1,000 or 1,600 houses on the Stone Haven property. It's about 4,000 more houses within a couple miles of each other, tax negative, putting about 8,000 more cars on I-66 and other local roads, and probably 2,000-4,000 more schoolchildren in local schools (figure 0.5-1 school child per average 3-person household), where PW already has the worst traffic and the most crowded classes (in terms of teacher: student ratio) in the state.

### **BOCS' Responsibility for the Current Mess + Corey Stewart, the Million-Dollar Man**

The Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) should change the entire county Comp Plan (they created it in the first place several years ago) to be more in line with current zoning -- if they're worried that it's drifted too far away from zoning realities and thus their activities regarding it may be open to legal challenge. They should also slow down residential development overall to improve the roughly 85:15 residential: commercial tax ratio (note your ever-rising real estate property taxes), and stop dumping so much of the county's residential development on the Linton Hall corridor. We're sick of it and disgusted by some of the BOCS members' corrupt and inexcusable behavior on this issue, the worst of all being Sellout-Chairman Corey Stewart, the county's million-dollar man (over \$1M in developer campaign contributions and counting.)

### **Good News: Two More Victories for Citizens; You Can Make a Difference**

At the last BOCS meeting on 17 Nov, the BOCS announced that it has withdrawn the Blackburn residential development proposal from consideration. That would have put 415 more high-density residential units along Balls Ford Rd. The one potentially good thing about this proposal -- the carrot of some commercial development being included to help improve the county's tax situation -- was phony because the commercial development was not "phased," meaning it didn't have to be built until after the residential housing was almost entirely completed, and thus the commercial would almost certainly have never been built.

Also, Pioneer Assemblage, aka Strathmore, has reduced its housing request from the maximum allowed in this case, 800, to 465 which, though still high-density, is half as high-density as it would've been.

The BOCS and developers are beginning to hear you. We particularly appreciate the sensitivity of BOCS members Maureen Caddigan (Dumfries), Mike May (and soon Ruth Anderson, Occoquan), Pete Candland (Gainesville), and Jeanine Lawson (Brentsville) to ordinary citizens' concerns about residential development and bad land use policy, as well as the potential of a growing partnership with Frank Principi (Woodbridge).

You can make a difference. Make sure the entire BOCS continues to hear your voice, loud and clear.

**What Can You Do To Help?**

If we can get to and finish it well before 8 Dec, we'll send you an updated Stone Haven flier that continues to tell an ongoing Prince William County story: residential developers have no truly compelling public reasons for high-density housing projects. In fact, these unnecessary tax-negative residential developments overcrowd our roads and schools, corrupt our politics, and needlessly damage the environment. So the residential developers must rely on lies, hoping that those who are gullible, uninformed, and/or have a vested interest in residential development will be able to shout down everyone else.

Here are links to the last flier we did on the lies being told to sell Stone Haven:

[http://pwcbg.org/StoneHavenFlier\\_BACK1.docx](http://pwcbg.org/StoneHavenFlier_BACK1.docx) and [http://pwcbg.org/StoneHavenFlier\\_FRONT1.docx](http://pwcbg.org/StoneHavenFlier_FRONT1.docx) .)

It's important for local citizens to hold their ground on Stone Haven and pressure their local representatives to do likewise. We'll get from the county the kind of government we've worked for and earned through either our vigilance or neglect. If we don't hold our ground, after this comes the deluge: 4,000 more homes, 8000 more cars added to the most crowded roads in the state, thousands more schoolchildren added to the most crowded schools in the state, higher taxes for everyone, and very possibly ultimately lower property values as PW County's livability continues to decline.

**Specifically, what can you do to help?**

- E-mail the BOCS at [BOCS@pwcgov.org](mailto:BOCS@pwcgov.org) and tell them what you think. Feel free to use info from this message in contacting them and getting this info circulating on social media sites and elsewhere online.
- If you know of others who are willing, ask them to help as well.
- If you feel comfortable doing so, also please lobby in person any of the BOCS members that you can. Here's their contact info: <http://www.pwcgov.org/government/bocs/Pages/BOCS-Landing-Page.aspx>
- And come to the 8 December 2015 vote by the BOCS on Stone Haven and sign up to speak against it. We promise you that the residential developers and their allies will be there in force, trying to drown out your voice. If you let us know, we'll sign you up early to speak. BOCS members judge public opinion on a given issue on this: turnout at the public decision meeting, particularly those speaking for or against the given proposal, as well as ordinary citizens contacting them before the vote.

Let us know if you have questions. We'll be in touch.

**PWCBG**

Prince William Citizens for Balanced Growth (PWCBG) stands for the following principles:

<http://pwcbg.org/WhyBalancedGrowthIsImportant.html>

PWCBG periodically sends out alerts warning citizens of major land use issues affecting them that will be coming before the Board of County Supervisors for decision. We do not use your e-mail for any purpose other than that, and we hide your e-mail address from other recipients (bcc:). If you do not wish to be contacted, please respond to this address ([ralph@pwcbg.org](mailto:ralph@pwcbg.org)) asking that your e-mail be removed.

Remember that the kind of county government we get will be what we've worked for and earned through either our vigilance or neglect. It's up to us to either take back our government, or stand idly by and watch while well-heeled residential developers and their political allies, including some BOCS members, continue to destroy our quality of life through harmful land use policies that negatively impact our roads, schools, taxes, property values, and quality of life.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." -- Margaret Mead*

Ralph & Kathy Stephenson

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