

Time for Sea Isle to Move Forward

To The Editor:

Recently, a “press conference” was staged in front of the building most Sea Isle residents recognize as The Trading Post. The intent was to “inform” residents as to why this burned out building still stands and to put pressure on the party opposing the project twice approved by Sea Isle’s Zoning Board. The story demands clarification.

Angelo Camano, a partner in the proposed project, asserted that jealousy was the primary motive. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Rather the breaching of 10 ordinances and approval of a project without good cause would be more accurate.

As the presiding judge noted, not one zoning board member could offer a substantive reason as to why this project should be approved, how such an egregious disregard for existing rules would benefit the City of Sea Isle.

In some attempt to justify his plan, Camano asserted that Dalrymple’s Card and Gift Shoppe is non-conforming. He fails to mention that the majority of buildings on the same block, including his own (Angelo’s Pizzeria) are also non-conforming by 2006 standards.

What obviously eludes him is that a building must conform to the existing ordinances at the time it is constructed. The building he mentions

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did conform to the ordinances in 1963 when it was erected. His buildings fail this test.

Camano said that he is "saddened" by the fact that "an amicable solution has not been found." Perhaps an amicable solution has not been sought by anyone appearing at this press conference.

Mayor Desiderio, who appeared at Camano's side, said that the "city is not holding up this project" and that "he is not going to be a referee between business owners."

This suggests that the city has no involvement. To the contrary, the lawsuit sites the Sea Isle City Zoning Board; therefore, the mayor is responsible to seek a solution. Desiderio also said that he does not want the city to "go through another summer season looking like this." I quite agree.

The mayor promised a swift removal of the burned out buildings on Landis Avenue. Only his personal reticence to put pressure on the owners to remove these health hazards prevents him from making good on this promise.

The city needs a plan, a plan to help it move forward, to encourage businesses to stay, to invite new business into town. Ordinances must be revised to allow owners to maximize the value of their properties, but at the same time address existing problems, not exacerbate them. Ordinances must be applied fairly to all, not just a few.

It is time for Sea Isle City to move forward. It is time for the leadership to take responsibility. The city has been waiting a very long time.

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Sea Isle City

(Charles Dalrymple is the brother of Sea Isle City Commissioner Angela D. Dalrymple.)