

Friends of Carefree, as we head toward the Independence Day celebrations this coming weekend, we all should remember the reasons for celebrating the event - "*Taxation without representation is tyranny*" as well as other significant issues. It is much more than a day off.

One of our many freedoms is our right to select those who represent us in government. Carefree residents recently exercised that right and voted resoundingly to defeat the Property Tax proposed by the Public Safety Advisory Committee and sponsored *unanimously* by the town council.

I believe our voters sent an even more important message to the mayor, council members, and staff, 'we are awake and watching'.

We will be watching to make sure the new General Plan reflects our wishes, to make sure it is not hijacked by any member of the staff, and to make sure the council heard the message. We want a representative on the council that is committed to the 80% voter majority. **Not** recycled former council members, **not** pro-tax supporters, **not** friends of former mayors, and *not buddies of current council members*.

On May 16th voters expressed their will and dissatisfaction with the council's business as usual attitude. **No more 7 – 0 votes on every issue.** The council must begin a process of change by selecting an individual who is representative of that 80% voting bloc.


10 individuals have expressed interest in filling the council vacancy created by the resignation of Tony Geiger the day after the election. Two candidates had been tireless volunteers, who worked countless hours to make sure you, the residents, heard the truth while council members pounded their misleading and false narrative.

The council will select the individual to fill the vacant seat and will do so at the July 11th council meeting.

Diane Roth and Colleen Scurti and are both outstanding individuals. Either of them will be a much needed and refreshing change on the council – they fought for you and believed in you. Now, you can help them by letting the mayor and every council member know that you support Diane and Colleen.

You can reach Mayor Crane via email, his address is Mayor@Carefree.org and you can reach the remaining 5 council members using Council@Carefree.org. If you meet Colleen or Diane in town, you will recognize them. Tell them they have your support; they deserve it.

Before leaving you today, for your holiday preparations, I will include a few notes I have received from *Friends of Carefree*. I encourage you to read on. Please remain alert and stay connected, in order to assure that ‘*Our Carefree*’ remains the Carefree we love.

P.S. The General Plan ‘Workshop 2 Survey’ is still open until June 30th, and the ‘Workshop 3 Survey’ is now open. There is no need to complete a survey in a single session. You can go back and continue, assuming you use the same device and IP address and as long as you have not clicked ‘DONE’ until you have actually finished your survey responses. The project worksite can be accessed from the www.Carefree.org website. At the very top of the page, you click the link, **Town Budget | General Plan Update** 

The Carefree General Plan is the only time Carefree residents get a say in the future of our town.

We do this by; attending community workshops, filling out the GP surveys, and finally when we vote on the GP in the November 2024 election. The revised General Plan must be ratified by a majority vote of Carefree residents. Once ratified, the General Plan is the foundation from which all other aspects of our town are built on, including future development.

Resident's desire for land preservation is in conflict with Carefree's Economic Development Plan.

The latest community survey clearly shows preservation of open land is the top priority amongst Carefree residents. A new document entitled Carefree Existing Conditions Report has appeared on the Carefree General Plan website. This document attempts to convince residents that there is already lots of land in Carefree dedicated to parks and recreation. But they are including private golf course land and land that Desert Foothills Land Trust holds in the northern parts of Carefree. The majority of this “park land” is not accessible to the public - whether it is a private golf course or the northern land that is only open to the public on very limited occasions and only then to a very rare few people. In reality, unlike Cave Creek or Scottsdale, Carefree has no large open recreational space that is easily accessible and open to residents and tourists year round. As many of you know, a group in Carefree called Carefreepark.org is dedicated to purchasing this 48 acres of state land and preserving the land as a walking and bike park accessible to everyone less than a mile from downtown Carefree. However, this group’s vision is currently in conflict with the Council approved Economic Development Plan which has targeted this 48 acres of state land for high density “hospitality” development.

Economic Development is inappropriately involved in Carefree resident's General Plan efforts.

Not only does this new document attempt to convince residents we already have lots of “parks” but it also states Carefree is a tourist town and that residents want even more tourism - “Carefree is committed to the continued success of the local tourism industry which pays homage to the Town’s original inception back in the 1950’s.” This statement, directly lifted from our Economic Development Plan, has intentionally been placed in our General Plan documents - that is wrong and violates residents trust that this GP process will be untainted. This statement has no place in our General Plan documents. The recent GP survey lists tourism growth as the second lowest priority among residents. Preservation of openland is the top priority with improving traffic congestion, keeping our semi-rural character and town fiscal sustainability rounding out the top 4 priorities amongst resident.

The General Plan is supposed to be driven by residents and it is imperative that it is not hijacked by Economic Development goals. And while our Town Council has already approved the Economic Development Plan - it is important to note the Economic Development Plan was never in alignment with our General Plan.

As an example, only months before our General Plan expired in November 2022, the Economic Development Group proposed a Special Planning Area amendment to make way for a resort on the corner of Tom Darlington and Carefree Highway. They followed the law, but not the spirit of the General

Plan. A revised General Plan should have been on the ballot for ratification by residents in 2022 - it was not. It is evident to everyone that the SPA for a resort was done months prior to the expiration of the General Plan to intentionally avoid a resident vote.

Please don't misunderstand me, I am not naive. Sales tax revenue is critical to our town. I have personally met with the developer interested in developing the NEC of Carefree Highway and Cave Creek Rd to understand why that prime area of commercial real estate that was zoned commercial by Carefree in 2018 remains undeveloped and is not contributing to our sales tax revenue. But I also believe in a balanced approach to development and preservation. Why zone more land commercial or high density hospitality when we can't even develop the most valuable corner in Carefree after 5 years and after two attempts by respected developers?

Residents drive our General Plan. Economic Development goals should never be allowed to circumvent the resident driven General Plan process. I oppose this interference.

Please Stay Involved in the General Plan process.

I ask everyone to please mark your calendars for July 17 and October 11. These are three General Plan community workshops which are important for residents to attend. The General Plan is OUR PLAN. Your attendance at these meetings, your time filling out surveys assures that this General Plan remains OUR PLAN and reflects OUR VISION...because this is OUR CAREFREE.

Stephanie Barbour,
Carefree resident & Voter

WHAT NEXT?

Thank you to all the Carefree residents who turned out for the property tax vote. The 73% voter turnout was unprecedented in our town's history. It was truly exciting to see this level of engagement from the community!

We now need to take a step back and collectively envision what we want Carefree's future to look like; to ensure that the voices of the 80% majority are represented in all matters. Residents deserve a voice that seeks to maintain Carefree's semi-rural character (as opposed to turning Carefree into a smaller Scottsdale); a voice that demonstrates critical thinking that dares to offer

different points of view; and a voice that will not kowtow to groupthink and unanimous votes on every issue.

The property tax voter turnout and results send one unmistakable message: that the town council is out of touch with 80% of its community. It is therefore incumbent upon the mayor and the town council to recognize this resident detachment and act accordingly in the selection of the open council seat. This means no cronyism. It means appointing to the council someone who represents the 80% majority.

Mike Davitt,
Carefree Resident & Voter

Here is a message from Daniel representing www.carefreePark.org :

Hi John,

Today I read with great interest your newsletter. It made me think of extending a request to you.

Last Friday, following right up on Carefree Park becoming a 501(c)3 organization, we have launched our online fundraising campaign. You can see it at CarefreePark.org/donate. In addition, we have set a phone number for the organization, 480-269-4070, in order to provide one more channel for those wishing to support the initiative in ways that the online drive is not addressing.

My request to you, if all possible, is to let your audience know about this new step forward on our quest to secure the land for Carefree Park. I feel it will be relevant to them all given our organization's objective very tightly aligning with the intent of our neighbors to keep the 48 acres as a park.

Thank you very much for considering this request. And happy Father's Day.

Best,
Daniel Crespo,
Carefree Resident & Voter

In closing,

Another reminder to the remaining members of the Carefree Town Council and the Public Safety Advisory Committee:

You perpetrated a deliberate misrepresentation of material facts concerning Automatic Aid in an effort to conceal the truth you knew, *or should have known*, thus endangering the future health, safety, and welfare of the citizens you have sworn to represent in your oath of office.

And there you have it, for now.

Respectfully submitted by John Traynor

Notice: In addition to reporting *facts*, this Newsletter will contain the author's perspective on topics or events affecting Carefree residents. That perspective may not be popular with the mayor, council members, staff, town attorney, or Facebook Trolls. The fact is, I don't care what they think.

If we lived in a perfect world, we would need but one newspaper.

God Bless America.

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Carefree, what life should be!

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"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

Attribution not verified; Not JFK and Not Edmund Burke. Possibly philosopher John Stuart Mill, 1867.

I attribute it to Common Sense!