

Vacating McComb Ave.

Why wasn't the neighboring property owner notified?

Did the mayor promise the owners of the new Microtel on W. Lincolnway that if they would build their low-end motel at that location, the City would vacate McComb Ave. to the east of the property and provide them more space for a parking lot?

And was the requirement (to notify neighbors of the intent) of that proposed gift to a private business, complied with?

Or will the end result of the vacation of this one-block long section of McComb and an alley running off McComb to the east enable property owners to the east to tear down their old buildings and sell the land to a developer for yet another low-end motel? Is that the purpose?

Let's set the scene:

McComb Ave. (east) and Stinson Ave. (west) are on either side of the Microtel property. Stinson is paved and in good condition. McComb is not. McComb dead ends at 17th St., Stinson continues past 17th St. (Stinson is the street that runs in front of the Comea Shelter.)

On 17th St., about half way between Stinson and McComb is the driveway to several properties owned by a man who was not notified of the plans to vacate McComb. Other neighboring property owners are part of the application for the vacation. One owns property, occupied units, whose only entrance is from the stretch of McComb to be vacated.

The same application asks that a narrow alley parallel to Lincolnway also be vacated. If the vacations are granted, it will create a parcel of land which will be much more valuable than the partitioned parcels. That's what this may be about.

Is that bad? Not necessarily. If the City can get the State to pony up money to "beautify" the W. Lincolnway gateway into the downtown, it may be possible to even attract a low-scale family restaurant there. Without vacating the street and the alley, that parcel isn't worth nearly as much.

The owner of several rental units north of 17th St. would have opposed this proposed action had he been notified. He was not. A certified letter, return receipt requested, was sent to his 2006 address (from the assessor's website) and when it came back undeliverable, no further attempt was made to locate that owner. It would have been a simple matter to ascertain the correct address, if anyone wanted to. The address on the assessor's website was wrong. The assessor's office is not the "office of record" for property ownership, anyway. The real estate office is. Real estate office records are updated constantly. The real estate office had the correct address for that property owner as did the assessor's office - it was wrong on the website only. This process to vacate McComb and the alley must start over. Nothing will come out differently but proper legal notice should have been made to all owners, not just those in on the deal..

Diggin' on Windmill

A few weeks back, a couple calls came to the Cheyenne Herald, asking what was going on just south of Dell Range, to the east of Windmill Rd.

There were several pieces of large equipment in place and grading had started for something neighbors knew nothing about.

The first caller asked if the City was actually going to build a rec center even though voters had said "no." We're at a helluva place in local government when residents don't trust that even an election would prohibit the mayor and his headnodders on city council from doing something once they had made up their mind. Voters be damned.

The second caller was just concerned about what the digging would do to drainage and whether his house would be flooded in the future when he has been dry in the recent past.

Well, both concerns are unnecessary.

A call to the city engineer's office provided information as to what was going on at that location.

The City is doing what God did not. They are re-routing Dry Creek to the south side of Dell Range. It seems that, while He thought the north side was the right route, the City knows better.

After learning what was going on, I concluded there was no real story - no "scoop" - and neighbors would quickly learn what was happening. Or so I thought.

Then yesterday I heard one of the local radio windbags telling a caller what was going on out there and he had it all wrong. No surprise there.

It would be nice if the other local media could contribute to informing residents as to what is going on and sometimes, even why. And, occasionally, even correctly. But, I guess that's too much to expect. When they opine, they often get it wrong. In a recent column, Reed Eckhardt referred to the Petsmart out north. Trouble is, there is no Petsmart in Cheyenne.

Do neighbors downstream of the re-routed Dry Creek have reason to be concerned? Possibly. The City doesn't have a very good track record on storm water drainage as evidenced by the recent flooding at the Civic Center - a facility that had remained dry for years until the construction of a new library and Catholic school with expansive paved parking lots.

But, no rec center. Had a candidate election not been so soon after the failed 6th penny election, it is quite possible that the City would have bonded the construction but they want to be re-elected so won't.

Has your Cheyenne downtown chamber of commerce really changed since the regime of the infamous Larry Atwell?

Some weeks ago, several Wyoming chambers of commerce announced they would each sponsor a candidate's forum with the Congressional candidates.

The Cheyenne downtown chamber of commerce acted in some capacity to coordinate the forums. Before each of the three events prior to the primary election, notices were sent out about the time, place, topics and format for each forum.

Starting in Jackson on June 19, attendance at each of the pre-primary forums sponsored by local chambers of commerce was very disappointing. The second forum was in Casper on July 10th and it, too, had surprisingly poor attendance. The writer attended that one and counted about 65-75 people, most of whom were aligned to one campaign or another. Cynthia Lummis and Gary Trauner both brought cheering sections and no announcement was made that such behavior at the forum was inappropriate.

It was at the Casper forum that the moderator changed the prearranged format before the first question was asked. He took it from a controllable format to one where participants could answer questions they were comfortable with and avoid the others. Lummis chose to sit out most of the questions. Attendees left not knowing where she stood on most of the

questions asked and issues discussed.

The final pre-primary chamber of commerce-sponsored forum was held in Rock Springs just five days before the primary - on August 14th. Even that late, they could not muster much of a crowd.

Next on the schedule was the Cheyenne downtown chamber's forum a couple days ago - on September 5th.

Alas, they found ways to both draw a crowd and make money. A public service? Hardly. The purpose was to sell a cheap meal and raise money for the chamber coffers. The press releases asked for the public to be informed that attendance would cost \$25, whether a member of the chamber or not - and "no shows" would still be billed. You could get informed only if you could afford it. If this isn't a page right out of the Atwell playbook, what is? The Capital City should be able to provide a free congressional candidate's forum for voters. Many other cities have and will. Not here. If they can't make money, voters can stay uninformed. Nothing's changed. And they wonder why the Cheyenne Herald disrespects them?

Note: They're doing it again. This time, for local residents who would like to see the two mayoral candidates debate, it'll cost them \$15.00. Nice touch, chamber.

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