May 19th Public Meeting notes and "COMMENTS"

Written by one of our SLL members. My comment is in green... marked "Kay's Comment:"

The following is a summary from the May 19, 2010 meeting on proposed bridge routes across Lake Lavon at Wylie East High School. Approximately 150 people were in attendance.

The author's comments are in blue marked COMMENT:

Ruben Delgado ran the meeting from Collin County and Rusty Ozmer of the HNTB. . Mr. Delgado introduced himself and Mr. Ozmer, and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Ozmer.

COMMENT: None of the current county commissioners were present. Cheryl Williams and Duncan Webb were present. Cheryl, as we all know, beat Jerry Hoagland in the run-off for Republican in Precinct 2…Duncan Replaces Kathy Ward in Precinct 4 come January.

He showed the maps with the growth projects and the lines for the map. A new "purple" line was added.

COMMENT: Yeah, because we told you in October 2009 that we didn't want ANY of them! So what is their solution? Add a new route! He then showed some comparisons on how the route would affect people, right of way acquisition, environment, etc. and the new purple route ends up being the least desirable.

COMMENT: How terribly convenient. At this time the best route is the red route.

COMMENT: This is the one they've wanted all along. Again, how terribly convenient.

He then showed a timeline with the bridge being completed in 8-14 years if funding comes through.

Judge Keith Self spoke and made it clear there is no current funding for this bridge, so the 8-14 years detailed is not going to happen. Judge Self also said that all money approved in the 2007 bond election for the feasibility study has been spent.

COMMENT: ("feasibility study" aka "we'll build a bridge")

COMMENT:THEN WHY ARE WE HAVING THIS MEETING?!

The floor was opened to comments. A gentleman expressed concern that he proposed a north-south bridge from CR 982 to 205 and this idea has never been explored. He insinuated that his idea isn't being considered because the commissioner's court knows what they want and these meetings are all a sham.

COMMENT: That's pretty accurate.

Next, a woman spoke and pointed out that we've already said no to a bridge, the cost is too high, and that we've already voted Jerry Hoagland out because of the bridge. She sent a clear warning to other county officials to drop their support of the bridge if they wish to continue in office.

Two men spoke that were sort of in favor of a bridge, but they were still critical of the process to date. One gentleman wants the bridge only from the west side of the lake to the peninsula. He said the east side bridge is a waste of time. I think both sides with a bridge are a waste of time. The other gentleman spoke of using 546 as the east side road, but he bashed the commissioner's court for using eminent domain.

Next the issue of property taxes was raised. A man from the peninsula said his land is worth less than $10,000 an acre, when land near Lucas is going for $40,000 an acre. When he asked a worker from the Collin County Tax Assessor's office about this, he was told, "you live in the armpit of Collin County." This man was very upset to hear a county worker blatantly tell him this. He suspects the real reason his value dropped so much is so that when the county comes to eminent domain his land and have to pay fair market value, they won't have to pay him as much.

Another gentleman addressed the growth. We keep being told the growth is coming and we need to accept it. He said there is a difference between natural growth and unnatural growth. This bridge is unnatural growth. What do you call unnatural growth? Cancer. He was very upset to see the idea of it being a toll bridge with the money going to Spain and he said we shouldn't "sell of the United States."

An elderly lady spoke of the land she bought for retirement. She was in tears asking to be left alone in peace.

COMMENT: Ruben Delgado was leaning back on the stage with a bored, insolent look on his face as he yawned while she was speaking.

A lady spoke about how the elected officials are supposed to represent us, not rule us. She is sick of this bridge being shoved down our throats. We keep telling them we do not want this bridge and they keep pushing for it. She also addressed Hoagland's defeat in the primary run-off.

Our own Lady of the Lake summarized the efforts of Save Lake Lavon against this bridge. It is a waste of taxpayer money, it is a farce to say it was approved by the voters in 2007 when it was buried among 20 other projects and the voters accept responsibility for that. Now we are telling them we don't want the bridge and they refuse to listen.

COMMENT: Delgado's "why-am-I-bothering-with-these-idiots" posture continued through the meeting. He rolled his eyes as Kay was speaking.

A lady from Copeville spoke at the horrible efforts to publicize this meeting. She bought a new house and was checking the mail from the old house when she found out about the meeting. She said it looks like the auditorium was pretty empty, but it probably would have been full if everyone had been told about this.

COMMENT: My concern was that people would go to Wylie High School, not Wylie East. Some, who are not familiar with the community, may not have realized there are two Wylie high schools now. I debated whether to set up camp at Wylie High School to redirect people, but I also wanted to speak at the meeting and had to get there early.

Finally, a man arrived from West Plano, saying he heard about this meeting from a friend, and no one in West Plano even knows about this bridge possibility. Their tax money would eventually go for this bridge since they are in Collin County and the entire county should have some say in this.

Kay's Comment: I spoke with this fellow after the meeting, and he said that he was not surprised that so few people know about this bridge study. A zoning change occurred near his home. Collin County had informed very few people. Neighbor told neighbor, and they were ultimately able to defeat the change. That's the happy ending we all want! Just gotta keep getting the word out there!

Delgado thanked everyone for coming, said the comments would be passed to the commissioner's court, and adjourned the meeting.

COMMENT: In summary: I counted 13 people who spoke. Ten were against the bridge in all forms. One wants a north south bridge, one wants 546 to be a part of it, and one wants only the western side of a bridge. However, even the 3 who support some type of a bridge are very critical of the process that has led to this point. I think it is safe to say that no one wants a bridge as the result of the current process.