

“Moscow on the Cahaba”



Boris the “professional planner” says:
“come join me in our newest game of
chance “ownership of private property”?
The “house” always has a sure thing!”

Unconfirmed rumor, from Shelby County, Alabama indicates that Boris the “professional planner”, unemployed since the fall of the Berlin Wall with nonnegotiable paychecks from the Kremlin was offered, a retainer. His permanent employment with the county hinges on his ability to wrench from unsuspecting property owners, deeds, titles, easements of all types including “conservation easements”, while telling them “its for the good of the community”. As the County handed Boris a bag of legal implementing tools to aid in the wrenching process their instructions were:

“Shelby County intends to fully pursue its vision of an integrated network of compact, walkable and sustainable communities, woven into a canvas of functional green infrastructure. By exploring, developing and using "out-of-the box" methods, tools and techniques, we plan to harness the power of "the market" to advance the development of traditional communities, and stem the tide of sprawl. Rather than reacting to development as it happens - as has largely been the case to date - Shelby County intends to proactively **direct where, when and how development occurs** following the goals and vision of the Plan. This plan is not intended to be a static document.”¹ emphasis added

Boris, during his study of the Shelby County Comprehensive Plan read with enthusiasm the following quote from Part IV page 1 – “..all Shelby County citizens can have the true communities “**we**” want rather than settling for the limited choices that the market currently provides.” *Emphasis added* His enthusiasm came from the realization that the “current market” is based on a free market concept and produces, in comparison to a socialist system “limited choices”. Thus eliminating the freedom to choose would enable “**we**” (Boris and company – he thought) to provide for the needs of his citizens.

Further research included attending the April 21, 2005 Chelsea, Alabama second meeting for their comprehensive plan. Why attend a municipal comprehensive plan meeting when it was the county that is negotiating for his services? Because “Shelby County intends to fully pursue its vision of an integrated network of compact, walkable and sustainable communities, woven into a canvas of functional green infrastructure.” Frankly, discontinuity between the county’s comprehensive plans would disrupt Boris’s plans to “provide” for the citizens.

Another question that intrigued Boris was how would “we” and company control private property? The official at the April 21 meeting provided the answer - “A property owner is considered a developer”. Thus the restrictions that apply to a developer in the comprehensive plan would also apply to private property owners. Hearing this statement

dissolved any qualms that Boris may have had regarding acceptance of a prime position with the new symbolic Red Square being built in the Heart of Dixie.

Words such as taxes, always exacerbate the best-laid implementation plan, Boris thought, but again he was delighted that proper wording in the County's plan would smooth the potholes in the road to Shelby County's Red Square utopia.

"Project developers (*private land owners*) will continue to have the right to develop (*add a room – build a fence*) under the conventional regulations that they have become accustomed to. However, those regulations and processes will become increasingly complicated and time consuming, as additional regulations, such as open space clearing and grading..., and additional time for staff (*more socialist underlings*) review are incorporated (*in the fatherland this is referred to as "jumping through hoops"*). Processing fees (*TAXES – da wonderful*) will be evaluated to more accurately reflect the County's processing costs, and the fee structure revised accordingly. As a result, **fees will likely be markedly higher** and the process lengthier, and among the incentives to be offered for implementing this plan, will be reduced or waived fees and streamlined review and processing as the preferred development scenario of this comprehensive plan; projects choosing conventional processing will not be eligible for these benefits.² *Emphasis and Boris's thoughts were added*

Qualms regarding relocating the family from the Fatherland to the New Red Square were quelled after his Mexican contact assured him that expedient and adequate transportation would be provided crossing the United State's southern border. Thus, with travel plans laid and with friendly guides he thought of one last question – would Natasha be interested in spearheading the County's social requirements for "sustainable development"?

Her reply to follow in a later article.

