

Tom Hannagan's Remarks to Marana Town Council Meeting 11/19/13

Tom Hannagan, resident of Highlands at Dove Mountain, attended the Nov. 19 Marana Town Council meeting and presented this statement to the council members and attendees.

"NOVEMBER 19, 2013

GOOD EVENING TO YOU, MR. MAYOR, AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL. I'M TOM HANNAGAN AND HAVE A HOME IN THE HIGHLANDS AT DOVE MOUNTAIN.

REGARDING CONSERVATION OF THE OPEN SPACE KNOWN AS THE TORTOLITA PRESERVE, I VERY MUCH APPRECIATED THE MAYOR, COUNCIL MEMBERS AND TOWN STAFF COMING TO THE HIGHLANDS TO EXPLAIN THE STATUS OF THE PRESERVE ON TUESDAY AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 6th.

THE PRESENTATION WAS VERY WELL ATTENDED DUE TO THE LEVEL OF CONCERN FOR THE PRESERVE ON THE PART OF CITIZENS IN THE DOVE MOUNTAIN AND SURROUNDING AREAS. THE TOWN'S PRESENTATION WAS INFORMATIVE, COMPREHENSIVE AND VERY PROFESSION.

A LIST OF CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EVENT INCLUDE:

- 1) CITIZENS AT THE MEETING WERE AND ARE ULTA-SENSITIVE TO ANY POSSIBILITY OF THE PRESERVE BEING ABANDONDED OR ACTIONS BEING TAKEN THAT MIGHT LEAD TO THE LOSS OF THIS OPEN SPACE.
- 2) FOR SOME REASON OR REASONS, MANY TOWN CITIZENS WERE VERY NERVOUS REGARDING MARANA'S RECENT ACTIONS, POSSIBLE MOTIVES, AND/OR THE COUNCIL'S DIRECTION RELATED TO THE OPEN SPACE STATUS OF THE TORTOLITA PRESERVE.
- 3) THE MARANA PRESENTERS, ESPECIALLY THE TOWN MANAGER, REPEATEDLY INDICATED THAT MARANA WANTED THE TORTOLITA PRESERVE, AND MORE OF THE TORTOLITA FAN PERMANENTLY PROTECTED AS OPEN SPACE.
- 4) THE NOMINAL FINANCIAL COST OF THE TORTOLITA PRESERVE LAND LEASE WAS PRESENTED IN CURRENT DOLLAR TERMS, BUT NOT AS A PERCENTAGE OF MARANA'S TOTAL CURRENT OR PROJECTED BUDGETS. WHILE THE LEASE COST NATURALLY SOUNDS HIGH OVER ITS 99-YEAR LIFE, THE EXPENSE IS AROUND 1% OF MARANA'S TOTAL BUDGET.
- 5) IN ORDER FOR MARANA TO SEEK MORE FAVORABLE FINANCIAL TERMS FROM ARIZONA OR TO SOMEHOW MOVE FROM THE EXISTING LAND LEASE TO A PERMANENT OPEN SPACE STATUS FOR THE PROPERTY WILL REQUIRE SUBSTANTIAL COOPERATION FROM ARIZONA, AND POSSIBLY EVEN OTHER GOVERNMENT BODIES.
- 6) IT IS CONCEIVABLE SUCH MAGNANIMOUS COOPERATION FROM ARIZONA WILL LIKELY REQUIRE A MOTIVATION FAR BEYOND ASSISTING MARANA WITH ITS COST ISSUES.

7) TO SAY THE LEAST, THE CITIZENS OF MARANA DEMONSTRATED A SIGNIFICANT LEVEL OF PENT-UP ENERGY AT THE NOVEMBER 6th MEETING AND COULD BECOME A KEY ALLY OF THE TOWN COUNCIL TO HELP INFLUENCE ARIZONA PUBLIC POLICY.

8) THE CITIZENS OF MARANA VERY MUCH WANT TO BELIEVE IN THE GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL IN THIS MATTER AND LIKELY WOULD COOPERATE IF MUTUAL GOALS WERE CLEARLY ALIGNED.

IT IS THEREFORE REQUESTED THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL, BY FORMAL RESOLUTION, CLEARLY STATES THAT ITS GOAL IS TO MAINTAIN THE TORTOLITA PRESERVE LAND AS AN OPEN SPACE IN PERPETUITY. A FORMAL ACTION ON THIS POINT WILL:

- CONFIRM FOR ALL, THE PRESERVATION GOALS THAT WERE PRESENTED TO US ON NOV. 6th,
- REMOVE RESIDUAL DOUBT ABOUT ALTERNATIVE LAND USAGE,
- GIVE THE EFFORTS TO CHANGE THE LEASE A MUCH LARGER AND MORE WORTHWHILE PURPOSE, AND,
- OPEN THE WAY FOR MARANA, ALONG WITH ITS CITIZENS, TO WORK AS A TEAM TOWARDS A COMMON GOAL.

SUCH A RESOLUTION, OF COURSE, NEED NOT IMPAIR AT ALL THE TOWN'S ABILITY TO FURTHER DEVELOP THE TANGERINE AND I-10 CORRIDORS. IT WOULD ACTUALLY INCREASE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THESE AREAS.

THE MARANA TOWN COUNCIL HAS ACCOMPLISHED MUCH IN A RELATIVELY SHORT TIME. ENHANCING THE SIZE AND PERMANENCY OF THE TORTOLITA PRESERVE, AND TORTOLITA FAN, AS OPEN LAND WOULD BE ONE OF MARANA'S MOST IMPRESSIVE AND LASTING ACHIEVEMENTS. THANK YOU."