

Will money 'talk loudest' in Bachtold debate?

In my favorite movie, "Sergeant York" (1941), one of the characters says, "I reckon its money what talks the loudest." Will that be the deciding factor in the proposed Bachtold subdivision?

I spent much of my life in a beautiful, charming gold-rush town in Northern California. Tragically, the once peaceful village got discovered and a coalition of wealthy developers, real estate interests, misguided businessmen, investors and builders, backed by City Council and county's Board of Supervisors, proceeded to destroy what had been the most pristine and intact gold-rush era town in California.

Is the same catastrophe that ruined my old hometown now coming to "rural" Walla Walla? Will money, "what talks the loudest," overrule everything else

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including common sense?

I take great pride in the fact that I once, virtually single-handedly, stopped a huge proposed subdivision in my hometown. I began flooding our local newspaper with letters explaining that the subdivision would be an absolute disaster for our city.

The streets in the town were nothing more than "widened mule trails." Finally, I suggested that the people of the city should be allowed to vote on the proposal.

To my everlasting amazement, the city approved that idea and the townspeople overwhelmingly voted "No" on the development. What's the old saying about the power of the pen?

But I suspect that the big money behind the Bachtold subdivision is not about to let the "local yokels" get in their way.

It's my fervent hope that the Walla Walla City Council won't just be a "rubberstamp" for Hayden Homes.

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