

# Paralysis by Analysis

By JACK KENNY  
 PAST PRESIDENT, REPUBLICAN  
 CLUB OF GREATER RESTON



It is 2020 and the Olympics Women's Swim meets are just over. The commentator is excitedly reporting on the performance of Angela Herman besting Mark Spitz and Michael Phelps gold medal records. He delves into Angela's background citing her hometown, Reston, and their world class swimming facilities. Fast-forward a couple of months and another commentator at Wimbledon is also agog at the performance of Jason Branch in capturing the men's title. In an interview, Jason mentions his hometown — Reston, and the tennis facilities and support the community offered. Restonians are justifiably proud of their community and all it offers. Property values go up: new businesses are attracted and new residents move in seeking a higher quality of life.

Realistic? Probably a dream. Justification to spend tens of millions of dollars? Not hardly. Reston is more than tennis and swimming and there are other competitive health club facilities available. It even includes bridge groups, couch potatoes, and past members of the Board among others. The RA has accumulated a stack of "recreation" and community development studies sitting on the

shelf. Indeed, one suggestion was to merely take those studies, collate the results and get on with some project. The current Board of Directors decided to do one more study. The results of which have served as a basis for the Brown's Chapel proposal — now gasping its last breath.

Lighted baseball fields particularly draw the neighborhood ire, even when the lighted fields were planned and advertised well before the property was developed. People are either totally oblivious or knowing of the development plans, purchase their residences anyway and then proceed to dispute the project. Pete Murphy, chairman, Fairfax County Planning Commission likes to ask at hearings: "What do you find so offensive about parents cheering their children on the sports field?" However, noisy adult beer parties after a softball or volleyball game at 10:30 in the evening are another matter.

As this writer has previously pointed out, the first priority is to find a permanent home for a headquarters. In troubled economic times as we are currently experiencing, residents look to their homeowner's assessment and

property taxes fearful of any increase. The tens of millions of dollars to finance the Brown's Chapel project would have come from continuing the Small Tax District #5, an anachronism that has long since met its objective and should be relegated to the past. It was with a certain amount of dismay that it became known that the STD #5 was squirreling away tax dollars to build up a reserve fund. Why not a tax reduction? Why has the community not been afforded a vote to decide if they want to continue to be taxed in this manner. Typical of taxation, it's simple to implement but the tax and spenders never let it go away.

What is dismaying is the treatment the current leaders of RA and RCC receive when attempting to propose community development projects. Their motives are questioned. Inferences are made that somehow they will personally benefit financially from a project. NIMBY organizations are formed. Columns in the local news media are filled with Monday morning quarterbacking and second-guessing. What's more to the point, some of the criticism comes from former Board members who have had their eight years or more of opportunity to initiate some project. All we have so far is that stack of studies. One may wonder if there are hidden agenda. Let's give credit due and get on with it.

