



PETER KNIGHT
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JUDICIAL DISTRICT 29B
HENDERSON, TRANSYLVANIA AND POLK COUNTIES
HENDERSON COUNTY COURTHOUSE
200 NORTH GROVE STREET
HENDERSONVILLE, NC 28792

Hand Delivery

September 19, 2023

The Honorable Rebecca McCall
c/o Denisa A. Lauffer
Henderson County Commission
1 Historic Courthouse Square
Hendersonville NC 28792

Dear Chairman McCall:

I am responding to a "Notice/Request" that was discovered by someone in the Henderson County Courthouse who then showed it to me; I have attached a copy of it.

As I noted publicly at an early meeting of the many county officials and county-retained architects and contractors who were taking part in planning for the future needs of Henderson County, I am very pleased with the fact that the Commission is fully engaged in providing for current and future courthouse facility needs. I am hopeful that the Commission is not questioning its earlier wisdom.

Certainly, any new facilities would take years to plan and construct, and should be expected to accommodate future needs for at least several decades. I have the opportunity in my job to take part in court proceedings throughout our State. It is clear as I travel which counties have met the challenge of growth, and which Boards have elected to put off decisions for later Boards.

I endorse the Commission's interest in hearing from those who work daily at the Courthouse to provide services to Henderson County citizens and others. They are in a good position to comment about courthouse needs. I suggest that should the Commission continue to pursue its responsibility in providing adequate courthouse facilities, these groups and individuals must be involved in order to avoid a finished product that fails to represent the best plan available on a given budget.

The Honorable Rebecca McCall

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I am presiding in a trial in another jurisdiction, and will be unable to attend the Commission's meeting on Wednesday. I invite each individual member of the Commission to call upon me personally for further comment and discussion; I will be pleased to set up a meeting with you outside of court sessions on an evening or weekend as the schedules of each member permit.

Best Regards,



Pete Knight

NOTICE / REQUEST

The Henderson County Board of Commissioners will be discussing the future of the Courthouse / Jail project at the SEPTEMBER 20, 2023 meeting. The meeting will be at the Historic Courthouse on Main Street, beginning at 9:30 AM.

The options to be considered will be:

- 1. Go forward with both Jail and Courthouse additions & renovations.**
- 2. Go forward with only Jail addition & renovation.**
- 3. Break the project down and phase it, beginning with the Jail.**
- 4. Put project on hold for 1+ years and see what economy does.**

The Courthouse addition & renovation WILL NOT go forward without the active, public support of the users (judges / lawyers((including DA / ADA's / PD / APD's)) / Clerk / Register of Deeds / administrative staff / Tax Office personnel etc.) The BOC must be convinced of the need to expand space!

Emphasis should be placed on the efficiencies of keeping Register of Deeds and Tax Assessor in close proximity to the Clerk of Court. Should the Probation Office be brought back into the Courthouse? Is it "ok" to go forward with the jail expansion and put off the Courts indefinitely?

This is a roughly \$200 million project. But the County can do it without raising property taxes.

Assuming we can show that the need is there - do we move forward now - or wait, hoping the construction costs come down??

If the folks who use the facilities on a daily basis are not ready and willing to come to the public meeting and voice their support and opinions - the BOC will not move forward! We will see a nice big jail (probably full of people) with a huge bottleneck at the Courthouse door.