

SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2008

Cowbirds Love Them Some Billboards



Billboard Bill Ramsey, President of the local Cowbirds, must have been sharing his secrets for economic development with **Perry Webb**, the President of the Springdale Chamber. Except for Ramsey's signature quote about any city regulation being a "job killer," Webb was reading from Ramsey's playbook in opposing an ordinance restricting billboards in beautiful Signdale.

The *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* editorial today says it well. "Not surprisingly, Mr. Webb saw the proposed ban on billboards as a sign of the apocalypse, if not the end of Springdale's pro-business environment. To quote the catastrophe-expecting Perry Webb: 'I think we are practicing bad government when we start banning legitimate businesses.' Uh-oh.

"If Springdale bans billboards, can a full-blown, communistic takeover of the city of chickens and 18-wheelers be far behind? Apparently not. Billboards have long been a part of Springdale's identity. They are unmistakable evidence that Springdale is open for bid-ness; all players eligible. The welcoming attitude has made Springdale what it is....

"Of course, the 'bring it on' approach has also been responsible for the look of Springdale's commercial districts. The look might be described as post-industrial dinge. Springdale's appearance has long been a source of amusement for its neighbors, especially the one just to the south that likes to think of itself as more cultured and less red-necked than Springdale. You know, the one that lost the Cracker Barrel to Springdale because of the size of the restaurant's sign. The one whose initials are Fayetteville."

That is vintage Bill Ramsey and the Cowbird Mantra that Fayetteville is unfriendly to business because we have a sign ordinance that prevents us from prospering like Springdale. We are fortunate that a majority of our citizens and a majority of the City Council disagree with that nonsense.