



Asociación Veïns de L'Alfàs

Unites affected owners



Press notice

18 October, 2008 Alfaz del Pi

DOES MAYOR VICENTE ARQUES REALLY WANT A DIALOGUE WITH THE PEOPLE OF ALFAZ?



The president of association "Veïns de L'Alfàs" had to learn from the press about the plans of the Mayor with respect to the urban development plan "Plà de la Serra" even while he is himself personally affected by that project. Also, the president of "AUN" (Abusos Urbanístics No!) the association of associations in Spain which opposes to the unjust law "Ley Urbanística Valenciana" (the notorious LUV), sir Enrique Climent, hadn't received any indication from the Mayor even while they spoke days before.

Veïns awaits with great interest the invitation of Mayor Vicente Arques to dialogue and to get the opportunity to expose which are the wishes of the people represented by Veïns. Marco Perotti brings forward that the Mayor had indicated to invite him around the second week of September, but that this remains a pending item. Interestingly enough Town Hall did invite "AUN" to speak behind our backs about the 80 Ha urban development Project "PAI Plà de la Serra"; Veïns auto invited themselves to this meeting, in which several aspects were covered, but with no time to cover the wishes of the people.

"The proposal of the amendments to Plà de la Serra which Arques presented last week to the press are a small step forward with respect to the urban development plan, but at the same time they represent a significant step backwards with respect to the dialogue between Town Hall and the people of Alfaz", states Perotti.

The people have united in the association for this and other reasons, and it remains to be seen if the planned changes -as we could read in the press- are indeed an indication that the Mayor really wants to adjust the plan or that he prefers to continue with cosmetic adjustments with the objective to get into the publicity spot light.

WHY DOES ALFAZ DEL PI CONTINUE TO DENY ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION?

A second indication that the course of Town Hall hasn't changed is that the file of the Urban Development Plan remains closed for the people who are supposedly affected as they live within the perimeter of the project. During August it was discussed with the Mayor that the Urban Affairs department of Town Hall had denied access to the plan and that a formal complaint was made with so far no response: Last 17th of July a citizen of Belgium –Alfaz resident since 35 years- formalised a denouncement via his lawyer where he confirms in writing that he would like to get access to the papers of the Plan because he has not yet been notified even while he is likely affected. Then, on the 21st of August a citizen of the United Kingdom –also resident of Alfaz since approx 35 years- wrote a similar letter... Two and Three months later they are still awaiting a response from Town Hall. In which country are we living here?



These are examples of a Town Hall which seemingly totally opposes to the directives given by the President of the Spanish Government –even being of the same political party- Mr. José Luis Rodríguez



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Zapatero, who demands “glasnost” to the Town Halls: the people should have immediate access to public information so that they can defend themselves against the Urban Development Abuses which are happening under the protection of a law which got formally denounced by the European Union. Mayor Arques confirmed that Alfaz has also signed the “Aarhus Treaty”, a document which obliges the Town Halls transparency in their actions, participation of its people and access to public information, like the urban development plans. So far we have been able to see little transparency and no real interest in executing this treaty.

HOW MANY COMPLAINTS DID TOWN HALL RECEIVE SO FAR: INDEED ONLY 48?

According to Town Hall they received 48 complaints. The letter of Perotti has -as an example- on itself already 17 suggestions for improvements included, but the Mayor counts this as one single complaint. Also it got mentioned that now as of a sudden there is no need to demolish 100 homes; this is particularly interesting simply because there are only 40 houses within the perimeter of “Plà de la Serra”. What the residents of this area continue to fail to understand is that they are supposed to contribute to the fortunes of the hand full of local rich rural large landowners, who see their capital gains skyrocket as their dry rural waste land and forrest land valued at 5 € por m2 converts into building parcels with a value of 250 € / m2. The people won't give up their battle against the injustice which is affecting them and they contemplate to also prepare a denouncement to the Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

WHY AREN'T THESE ANNOUNCED CHANGES MAKING THE PEOPLE HAPPY?

The lack of dialogue provokes that the people continue to have doubts about the exact changes to the plan Plà de la Serra. “It's a matter of respect that we get notified in writing -states Perotti-, so we can discuss this with our architect and with our lawyer to study this in detail. Only through this way there will be a possibility to trust what's being proposed by Town Hall”. It looks like that Alfaz adjusts this plan to what they consider to have understood from the complaints... using the complaint letters as their basis. What is not contemplated is that many neighbours still don't have a clear understanding of what's awaiting them, so how would they then be able to outline which are the changes that are needed? This issue is provoked by the ambiguous manner in which various people of Town Hall keep contradicting each other, and don't tell the full truth. The association has a relevant role in the translation of the wishes and interests of their more than 350 associated people and Town Hall.



A CALCULATION EXAMPLE

Several neighbours have their home on plots of 770 m2. In this urban development plan these owners will have to cede 35% of their land without any compensation, and on top of this they need to contribute 30.000 € to an infrastructure which they already largely have. Where do they get this 35% of their land? Then what can be done with that? Is the idea to put houses on their drive ways? Or do they have to buy 35% of land from the major land owners at prices as high as gold to then hand these lands over to Town Hall and to the urbanising agent? The result is that after paying and buying/ceding land that these neighbours still have a parcel of insufficient size to be able to build a new house on it. What did they gain? Nothing. What did they lose?

The association considers that it's obvious that these houses require a separate classification because they are consolidated by the mere construction so many years ago.



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WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?



We endorse to jointly develop plans to improve the quality of life in Alfaz del Pi. This requires an open communication with the Mayor who is at the same time also the counsellor of land affairs. If the Mayor continues to deny his responsibility to facilitate access to public information then we will ask a judge to demand this to happen. Then the project will clearly

delay and that will help nobody. The Town Hall can not negate to listen to what the people want; the feudal times have past a long time ago.

We will tirelessly outline to the Mayor and to the Counsellors of Alfaz del Pi that Town Hall violates laws and norms of the European Union.

The association dedicates itself to the studying of urban development plans within the perimeter of Alfaz del Pi, like in Bello Horizonte, Finca Angelita, Finca Bodega, Nadala, El Tossal, Plà de la Serra (including Excalibur), PAI Ferrería, El Cautivador, La Carbonera, Foia Blanca, Finca Roca, etcétera.

Petitions were received from neighbours to study expropriations of homes in the costal strip of Albir. We are also interested in the traffic circulation plan and –for example- the practice in Alfaz to permit that very large Lorries may park in residential areas. Our Town Hall seems to not pay special attention to the selective waste collection, how many glass containers are there in Alfaz?

Is there enough water available to supply a village to grow from 29.000 inhabitants to 70.000? The Vice Chairman of the Association, David Byrne has requested a report from the Regional Water Authorities, the “Confederación Hidrográfica del Júcar”.

THE MAYOR WILL HAVE SOON MORE COMPLAINTS THAN THE VOTES HE RECEIVED DURING ELECTIONS

Take a peek at the web site of Veïns de L'Alfàs: WWW.PAIALFAZ.ORG

Here one can bring forward new ideas and/or problems, or join –we have already more than 350 people associated- and one can collaborate in the collection of even more signatures; the Association holds already more than 1.900 signatures against the urban land abuse practices within Alfaz del Pi. This number of signatures can be contrasted when comparing this to the last local elections where of the 29.000 inhabitants only 2.223 voted for Mayor Arques... Now he knows that he has at least 1.900 people who confirmed with their signature that they are in disagreement with these plans.

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