

Boone ETJ Powers On The Line in Raleigh

Written by Steve Frank
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Town of Boone officials will have a wary eye on a committee meeting in Raleigh, set for 5 this afternoon, with the fate of Boone's powers to regulate development in the extraterritorial jurisdiction district on the line. Senator Dan Soucek's bill S865 has passed the senate and is set for action in the house committee on government this afternoon, Mayor Andy Ball wondering out loud about the reasoning behind the senator's bill at last Thursday's town council meeting, "To me, I'm not getting the reasons from Senator Soucek or Representative Jordan on 'why it's Boone.' I hate for it to be the normal reason which is politics." Councilwoman Lynn Mason also asked 'why', saying "The standard line that is heard is that Boone abuses their ETJ authority, yet when we've asked for specifics, the most specific we received was 'the view shed.' And the public has been very supportive of protecting our view shed." And she said "They talk about property rights, but its one-sided. It's not about the property rights of these current property owners—and they have a lot to lose." Councilwoman Jennifer Pena said, "Mr. Soucek purports to be taking care of the needs of the people of Boone and he's not." And she said, "I think its predatory behavior on Mr. Soucek's behalf." Mayor Ball asked for citizens to contact representatives on the committee to express themselves on the bill. Senate Bill 865 is Soucek's second attempt to end ETJ powers for Boone, and has a week for action before the end of the short session, set for Friday.