



Letters to the Editor

I read in the Village News, March 22, 2017 XIX No.32 issue, the front page editorial titled "Cat lovers concerned over new ordinance amendment" by Mark Fausz, Managing Editor. Cat lovers concern was not on the Board meeting agenda. A better title for a front-page news article would have been "the Board passes ordinance amendment limiting feral cat ownership."

In the first paragraph, Mr. Fausz sourced Psychology Today as to the percentage of pet owners who like dogs and those who like cats. I do not think that came up in the hearing on the ordinance amendment. Later in the article, he referred to the supervisor who could not find a friend on the Board to second his motion to delay for one month the vote on the ordinance amendment. The supervisor was not looking for a friend, but rather, looking for a board member who shared his position to delay the vote.

Subtle personal interpretations and comments cloud the issue at hand. Such can be divisive to civil discourse, particularly when they have no relevance to the decision

making process.

The issue at hand was an ordinance amendment that addresses and strives to control the impact of feral cats on the community. The need for the amendment originated from a citizen caging a very large number of feral cats outside in a subdivision. The feral cats were allowed to roam during the day and caged at night. The citizen supplied food, water, and caging. The amendment would be voted up or down after a public hearing and discussion by the Board.

Mr. Fausz did not mention a single citizen who spoke to the Board in support of the ordinance amendment. Not a single citizen. He was more troubled about "cat lovers concerned" as his headline indicated. He did not mention the citizen who could not give his graduating senior a backyard barbecue party because of the feral cat stench. He did not mention the citizen who had breathing problems that are exacerbated by the feral cat stench. He did not mention the difficulty of selling one's house in the vicinity of the feral cats. In essence, the editor did not mention the neighbors who have been denied the use of their property for their enjoyment because of the feral cats in the area. They cannot enjoy their decks, yards, flower beds, etc., because of feral cat stench and excrement.

In opposition to the ordinance amendment, Mr. Fausz mentioned Tabitha Treloar, Director of Communications at the

Richmond SPCA, and one citizen having two feral cats that are blind and two feral cats that can't walk. This citizen cared for the feral cats at her expense. I assume, because of their condition, they did not roam.

Tabitha Treloar said in her opposing statement, "The amendment increases the risk of cats becoming homeless." Really? Feral cats are already homeless as a result of TNR and other causes.

The SPCA and other humane entities promote a TNR program as a means to control the feral cat population. TNR stands for Trap Neuter and Return or sometimes Release. Such a program does not encourage responsible cat ownership. It encourages neutering the feral cat and then returning it to where it was found or releasing it, say, on the lawn of the Richmond SPCA headquarters. Now we know that would not work. Get the picture. Do as I say, not as I do.

TNR and feeding feral cats that continue to roam is not a definition of responsible pet ownership.

Responsible pet ownership requires that you, the owner, for 24 hours a day and every day, provide a loving environment with food and water, a warm environment in the cold months and a cool environment in the hot months, regular visits to a veterinarian for health care, a nice bed, a fenced-in yard for exercise, controlled barking during certain times of the day or night, a chip for owner

and pet identification, a license, a leash and collar for walking outside the yard, plastic bags for sanitation pickup from the neighbor's yard, payment of a stiff penalty for breaking some law, etc.

Whoa! There I go. Dogs... those lovable...troublesome...little...devils.

What is good for the goose is good for the gander. Just maybe, what is good for dogs would be excellent for feral cats. For once, they could be called cats cared for by responsible pet lovers.

I commend the Board for passing the ordinance amendment by a vote of 4 to 1. David Hatch

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