

Local council meeting

19.08.24

Condolences

Kindly allow me to convey our heartfelt condolences to our fellow councillor Dr Miguel Balzan on the sudden loss of his dear father. We understand that this is a heartbreaking and sorrowful moment, definitely one of the most challenging moments that a human being will experience during a lifetime. We offer Miguel our full support to help him come over these difficult times. God's ways are indeed very mysterious. In Him we need to trust.

Re Zoning in Triq Fuq Il Gonna

We are all aware of the issue that has cropped up re rezoning issue in triq fuq il Gonna.

Development in Malta is regulated by policies as set out by PA, then MEPA, during the 90's.

Swieqi is divided in zones which define where a certain type of development is allowed and where certain development is not allowed.

Thus we have 'villa areas', 'commercial areas' and areas where apartments may be developed. These are usually evidenced by colour coding, as per attached plan.

When one wants to change the policy, that is to rezone an area, one needs to apply to PA for this.

During the past 12 years that i have been a member of the local council, there were several applications for rezoning in various parts of the locality.

The local council always objected to these claims. And to date all such claims were refused by PA. We did not do this for the simple reason of objecting or because we are against development.

We did so because

- 1) the policies should be respected and
- 2) because these policies were set so that a balance be retained in the population of the locality.

we are aware that every applicant believes that he/she has a right to their claim, and that the reason for wanting the rezoning is for the benefit of the family. We are also aware that all applicants do not like the fact that the local council objects to their application.

We are also aware that the policies may be outdated and that they need to be changed.

However this can only be done when PA decide to do so. We cannot carry out change ourselves.

To date we have been guided by consistency. We always objected.

We are aware of the 'precedent' policy. Thus if one application is accepted, there is a the possibility that all the other applications will be accepted.

Is this what we want ?

What should we do from now on ?

Should we remain consistent with our stand ?

Should we throw in the towel and allow a free for all ?

What i find damning is that certain 'experts' in the field of development misguide their clients. The policies are there for everyone and they are not subject to interpretation. The least that they could do is to consult the local council before going ahead with the application.

The fact that an 'expert' in the field believes that he/she has an authority to change policies should not put undue pressure on a local council that has been downright consistent in this area.

It is now up to us to decide what must be done.

Noel Muscat

19.08.24
