

Mayor New Pinehurst Leaders Already Taking Hard Look at Issues They'll Face Demonstrating Irresponsible Thinking

New Pinehurst Leaders Already Taking Hard Look at Issues They'll Face

Matt Lamb || Staff Writer mlamb@thepilot.com Nov 10, 2023

Quote: ...Ficklin and Pizzella also spoke about the current relationship the village has with its small businesses.

“For some reason, and I don’t know why, I think the communication between the business owners in the village and the village government is not, it is not working,” Ficklin said. “The only way I know to help make that better is to start communicating with the individual businesses down there and start finding out what the issues are and helping them solve them — we have to do that.”

Parking may be a natural issue in the commercial center of the village, but Ficklin wants to pursue solutions that help patron traffic.

“Part of the issue is they have parking that is designated for ‘shop, dine, visit,’ and that is not what’s happening in those parking spaces.”

[God Bless Barb Ficklin, someone who gets it and will be a welcome new friend to small business in our Village!] ...Eagle!

Pizzella said the village is adding a handful of parking spots and that Pinehurst Resort recently added 90 spots to alleviate stress, but overall lauded the current state of commerce.

“I think parking will always be a challenge, and we are always looking for ways to improve it, but there’s no vacant storefronts. People are coming here all the time to visit, and I’d rather have a crowded downtown where people sometimes can’t find parking than a vacant downtown where you can get rockstar parking any time of day.” **[Clearly, Pat does not seem to get it] ...Double Bogey!**

So, let's break it down and set the record straight...

1. “the village is adding a handful of parking spots” What in the world difference is a “handful” of new parking spaces going to make? It's not about more parking spaces (and he knows this), it's about who is parking in the spaces! ...and it's about a total lack of enforcement of even the basics like who is really **parking all day** in the new ‘Shop, Dine, Visit’ spaces, or in the marked Loading and No Parking Zones.
2. “and Pinehurst Resort recently added 90 spots to alleviate stress” He knows full well, these are for the Resort's use, not for locals, non-resort visitors or business owners & employees! This has not alleviated any stress on downtown parking – FACT, even Resort Caddies are still parking on downtown streets.
3. “but overall lauded the current state of commerce” FACT, a substantial number of downtown businesses are down over 20% on the year (and Pat know this!) ...how could anyone laud the current state of commerce??
4. “I think parking will always be a challenge” Blowing Rock, NC has very similar parking issues – the difference? They Get it! Their Mayor and Council are meeting the challenge and tackling the very same issues as well-as being very supportive of small business and local residents <https://www.hcpress.com/blowing-rock/blowing-rock-receives-rough-draft-of-sustainable-tourism-management-plan-which-features-ways-to-address-parking-and-traffic-concerns.html> VOP? we continue to deny there are any problems and any negative effect on small business.
5. “we are always looking for ways to improve it, but there's no vacant storefronts. People are coming here all the time to visit” So no vacant storefronts (and a fatally flawed annual business survey) is the metric or indicator of a healthy business community downtown? FACT: There are two businesses that closed this year, and other businesses that have had to take out small business loans to survive! (Pat has also been told this, so he knows the reality). “but there's no vacant storefronts” also shows the pervasive lack of concern for small business in downtown Pinehurst – businesses come and go, and someone will always fill in the spaces of failed businesses is the thinking and attitude. Additionally, “Looking for ways to improve” ...but never actually doing anything significant to improve! The recent “improvements” to downtown (\$200K of which likely

a significant percentage went to another outside consultant, who by the way never asked any small business owners their opinion on anything) pales in comparison to the \$1.5M spent (for example) on artificial turf for Cannon Park baseball field, which only a small percent of the residents use (compared to the local and visitor use of downtown)...Yes our new Mayor supported that prioritized expenditure.

6. "I'd rather have a crowded downtown where people sometimes can't find parking than a vacant downtown where you can get rockstar parking any time of day." This entire statement makes absolutely no sense and defies logic. Why should residents/constituents walk two to three blocks from Sandlot to shop or dine, and business owners and employees get priority on the "rockstar parking" spaces, in which they occupy the entire day?

Pat (and Council) were presented a study and retailer petition last year indicating the parking matters were costing Retailers over \$2M in lost revenue per annum - **zero response**. See https://www.celebratepinehurst.com/B-Board/ewExternalFiles/Parking_Memo_Petition.pdf

Many locals have stated in annual surveys (this from 2022) they do not ever come downtown, and the largest reason is no parking. In the annual VOP Survey 61% of residents said they do not shop downtown and 27% cited parking as the reason. In a 2022 Park & Ride survey 47.7% cited parking as the reason they don't come downtown. Again, this represents a VERY significant amount of lost business (\$2M) each year for retailers, and restaurants a like amount of lost business...VOP continues to ignore these statistics, to the detriment of small business owners. **And Pat thinks it's just a matter of people wanting "Rockstar parking."**

Again...**Double Bogey** right out of the starting blocks for our new Mayor!

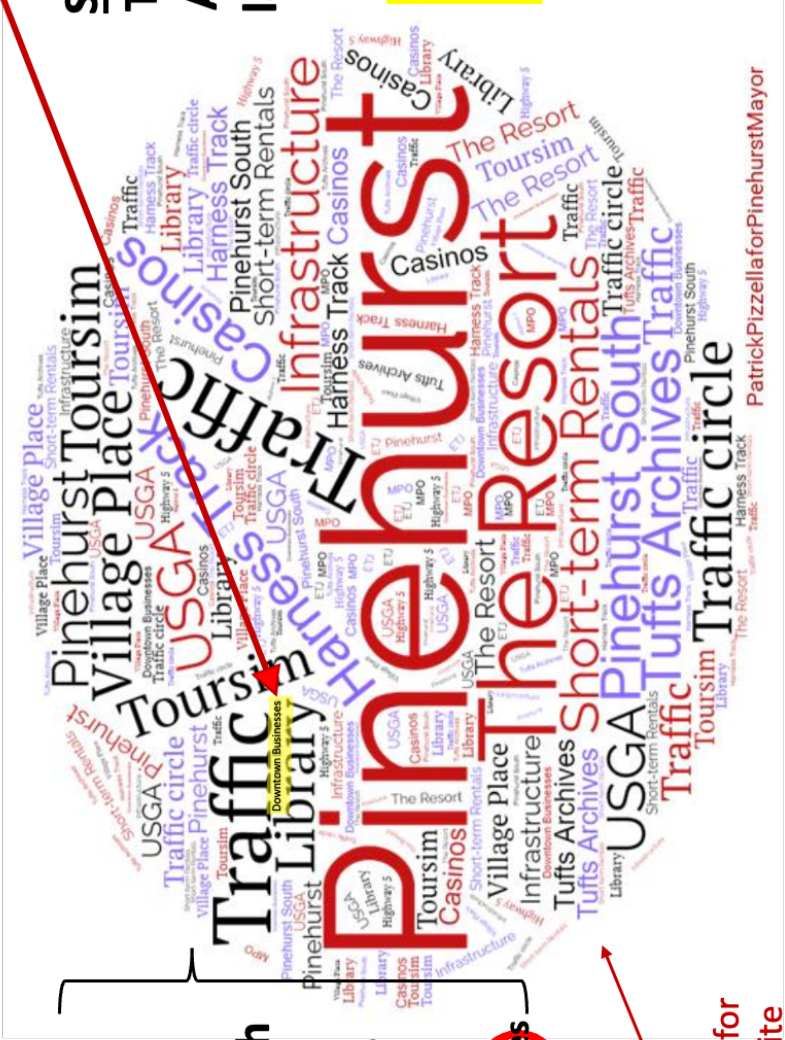
None of this came as a surprise, as Pat showed his disregard and lack of support for downtown small business in his run for Mayor campaign graphic on the next page. **Hopefully a quorum of the new Council will support small business downtown better than Admin/Council/Mayor have in the past!**

**STANDING UP
FOR
PINEHURST!**

**PATRICK PIZZELLA
FOR PINEHURST MAYOR**

**But NOT for
Pinehurst
Small Businesses**

MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE AS MAYOR**



- +THE RESORT
- STR's
- +Village Place
- +Pinehurst South
- +Tuffs Archives
- +Traffic & Circle
- +Tourism
(for Resort)
- Downtown Businesses

Small Businesses
The backbone of
America and the
largest employer!
in Pinehurst!*

**WE DESERVE
BETTER!**

**** Graphic from Pizzella for
Mayor Campaign Website**

***Collectively**