

Frank Maxant's testimony of 1-25-2012  
 The Devens Committee and citizen interest in community affairs.

The Devens Committee is, in many ways, similar to a Board of Selectmen for the DREZ community. The DREZ community elects members to DC annually. In last year's election, 17 of the ~225 DREZ residents voted. In the ensuing year, DC was very active for the DREZ community, advocating vigorously for their interests at JBoS. In particular, they filed this bill, which will have a profound effect on every one of their residents in every aspect of their lives. This year's election was held a week ago today, if I'm not mistaken, when people knew of this hearing, so interest in their community's affairs should be at a peak. This year, only 8 people bothered to vote, & they all voted for the same candidate.. Looking at that more closely, I'm told that one of the votes was the successful candidate, another his wife, & 2 more his children, leaving only 4 voters from the 200+ general population who bothered to vote. **(Afterwards, Rick Bernklow & Ms. Barbadaro told me that isn't true; that Rick wasn't even one of the 8 votes. -- Sorry!)**

Voting Events	Population	Attendance	Percentage	Compare - 8	Compare - 17	Compare - 26	Compare - 103
Ayer TM vote rezone VBS 2009	7131	95	1.33%	254	539	824	3264
Harvard TM vote rezone VBS 2009	5960	189	3.17%	212	450	689	2728
Devens DC uncontested election 2012	225	8	3.56%	3			
Devens DC uncontested election 2011	225	17	7.56%	7			
Devens DC uncontested election 2010	225	26	11.56%				
Devens sudo TM vote on 2B 2006	225	103	45.78%				

I know how an election where only eight votes are cast looks to a casual observer. This fact was used to demean the population of Devens and the interest demonstrated in community affairs. Let's closely look at two recent events in the towns of Ayer and Harvard and compare with four recent voting events in Devens. The facts are shown above, let's elaborate.

The first three Devens votes were for uncontested seats on the Devens Citizen Advisory Board, the fourth was the community meeting to vote on the 2006 2B proposal calling for Devens to become an independent town.

The Ayer and Harvard votes were super town meeting votes to consider rezoning Vicksburg Square, allowing 350 residential units of housing. Considering the percentage of population and comparing the actual citizen participation with the Devens community percentages you find that 95 Ayer registered voters or 1.33% of the population participated and 1 % of the population voted to defeated the proposal. You can see the projected numbers needed to match the three uncontested votes on Devens. If we compare this critical vote with the 2B Devens vote we find that Ayer would have needed 3264 participant to match Devens level of participation. Numbers don't lie only desperate politicians abuse numbers to make their point. The lone little 3 on Devens 2012 line is the number of Devens voters necessary to match Ayers' 2009 voting percentage. The 7 on line 2011 is the number necessary to match Harvard's 2009 voting percentage

In fact this little exercise of truth supports the basic premise that I have been expressing for a number of years. The effort to suppress residential population in the development of Devens was and is an effort to control and manipulate this development without the troubling interference from a significant population living on Devens.

I implore the towns of Ayer and Harvard to immediately determine their desire to retake jurisdiction of their portions of Devens at a town meeting vote. Go on record one way or the other. Place a stake in the ground around which legislative decision makers can measure the wisdom of supporting an independent town or support Ayer and Harvard in effecting that return

to jurisdiction. As a citizen of Devens, I do not have a problem of arguing for independence against a firm, unyielding desire by the towns to retake jurisdiction.

The critical aspect of such an action is to focus state redevelopment efforts to support either the return of jurisdiction or the creation of a town with aggressive and appropriate planning commencing immediately, not 2033. My 1-25-12 testimony as reported; "Crosby said there's a need for "long term unbiased planning" for the DREZ to serve the region's and commonwealth's interests. Or do we limp along and loose this seminal opportunity to act?"