

People vs. trees is not the issue

I am writing to express my opinion of remarks and innuendoes which have appeared in print concerning the controversy surrounding the placement of group homes for the developmentally disabled into Corson's Brook Woods.

As a way of introduction, I am a member of Protector's of Pine Oak Woods, married and the mother of five children. I would like you to know that for many years I canvassed door to door for the Association for the Help of Retarded Children, I was a driver in the Meals on Wheels program, and I have been involved in the work of St. Andrew's Church in many facets. I have worked for the past eight

years in a physician's office, where a large part of my job involves helping patients forge their way through bureaucratic red tape.

I am highly incensed that people have made these accusations, that members of Protector's of Pine Oak Woods care more about trees than people. This is only clouding the real issue of the state's deceitful handling of site selection for the proposed group homes. These people-versus-trees remarks are not based on any knowledge of the people involved in conservation issues.

The members of Protector's who I do know personally do not live in a vacuum of just one issue. They are involved in many aspects of life, with no compensation and at great expense of personal time, because of a

high degree of commitment to quality of life issues. These do include the saving of our woodlands, which is a people-oriented issue. Who do you think we want to save the woodlands for? I would be more happy to provide as many biographies as required to set the record straight. There must be room in any issue for disagreement, without this dirty, unfair and totally untrue attack on environmentalists motivations.

Most importantly, this entire controversy and its resulting bad feelings was avoidable and unnecessary if the site selection process had been handled in a truly open manner, with the public, conservation groups, city Parks Department, city Planning Department providing input.

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