



[STEVE-BAKER-VOLENTE.COM](http://STEVE-BAKER-VOLENTE.COM)

Neighbor,

This Council election is critical for the future of Volente and there's a dramatic difference in my goals for Volente versus the Voice of Volente group (Connors-Wilder-Ryan). Many of the goals are the same – low taxes, property rights, simpler ordinances, protection from BCRUA, no high-density development, but the enormous difference is **I want to improve our local governance and Connors-Wilder-Ryan want to give our governance away and let Travis County control Volente and our future.**

The Voice group, an exclusive faction that only allows their approved residents to join, is hoping to replace the independent incumbents Andy, Steve, and Kit to gain control of our Council. The Voice group, partly organized by large property owners and real estate agents, wants developers and land owners to do what they want regardless of the effect on the neighbors and the community by turning our governance over to Travis County and the LCRA.

**Travis County bureaucracy doesn't understand or care about us** and the needs of our small lakeside community. We would have no say in what goes into their rules. No one to help protect you from what a neighbor or business might do. They would just put us in line behind its 1.2 million Austin area residents. Volente's new attorney says he has served 125 towns in Texas, including very small ones, and **none have ever turned over development/building codes to their county.** LCRA doesn't really care about us either. They nearly drained the lake a couple years ago favoring rice farmers over the lakeside communities. And, **LCRA doesn't limit impervious cover** on lots <1 acre or lots platted pre-1990, allowing a landowner to replace greenery with as much concrete and buildings as they want. There are many Volente properties platted pre-1990 or <1 acre, including Bill Connors, the leader of Voice. I don't think it is good for Volente to be treated like just another Austin area development. I moved here to get away from Austin.

Connors-Wilder-Ryan Voice website states their platform: "beyond controlling future development, there is little need for other city services. Travis County provides police protection -emergency services - fire protection The LCRA already enforces septic, impervious cover, runoff laws" The only service missing is road and right-of-way maintenance" The net of the Connors-Wilder-Ryan plan is to just allow the Village to control zoning and major subdivisions, but otherwise, let property owners do what they want. Build as tall as you want, as close to the property line as you want, cut and fill and concrete as you want, regardless of the impact it has on neighbors and the beauty and quiet of Volente.

I believe we should protect the property rights of a land owner to do what they want, if there is not significant negative effect on their neighbors. I believe we should allow some commercial, retail, recreation development, **if it doesn't drastically change our rural lakeside character and it benefits the existing residents**, not just the major land owners, developers, businesses, and real estate agents.

Voice's Connors-Wilder-Ryan are clear on their goal to give away our governance and let others control Volente. The following comments were made by Voice organizers/supporters on the June 2017 NextDoor topic "What Should the VOV Government Be?" Curtis Ratica (a Voice spokesman) posts: "would run (for council) **only for the point of helping to unincorporate**" Then the Voice's Bill Connors, Chris Wilder, Judy Barrick, Kristi Belote, Lydia Lamoreux (realtor) all respond encouraging Curtis to run.

Judy Barrick (a Voice organizer and Volente Chamber of Commerce founder) shares her vision for Volente on Nextdoor: "We are **not** a bedroom community"... "we are a lakeside recreational Village with restaurants, marinas, party boats, jet ski and boat rentals, boat repair shops....real estate agents" ... "There is no health and safety issues".

To accomplish their agenda, a leader of Voice, Bill Connors, pulled a **bait and switch** to sneak a massive change in Volente governance at the last council meeting in 2015 before Andy, Steve and Kit were sworn in. He asked for a Special Meeting to "revise language", "to clarify Council intent" for an ordinance. Instead he "proposes a new ordinance, not listed on the agenda" that **repeals the entire site development building codes ordinance**. The City Attorney states the proposed action "does not clarify anything". The Mayor states "this motion is incredibly inappropriate... not having a public hearing on this is appalling". Fortunately, Council realized what Connors attempted to pull and defeated it. There is more shocked citizen comment in the official 11/4/15 meeting minutes at [Steve-Baker-Volente.com](http://Steve-Baker-Volente.com).

### Top 3 Reasons to Re-elect Steve Baker:

- **Preservation Minded:** I want to protect our rural character and strategically plan for the inevitable growth and development in a way that benefits our residents... with minimal and effective government.
- **Qualified, Experienced:** I am a CPA/consultant with 30 years' experience in strategic planning, operations efficiency and negotiating. I have served two years on Volente council as the Mayor Pro Tem and have chaired the Finance/Admin committee and the Public Safety committee.
- **Objective, Independent:** I have no construction plans nor business interests here. I am not part of any faction or group that pressures me to support their goals. My family plans to spend the rest of our lives in Volente and I just want to help make Volente a wonderful place to live.

Visit my website [Steve-Baker-Volente.com](http://Steve-Baker-Volente.com) to learn more about this election, including:

- **What are the top issues facing Volente Council?**
- **Why I want to serve on Council and what is my vision for Volente?**
- **What does Council do, and **what have been their accomplishments** to help our community?**
- **What are my qualifications, public service, experience and background?**

I ask that you support me to help improve our local governance, **not give it away**. Council fixed the zoning ordinance decreasing variance requests by 90% and has made great progress on simplifying the site development ordinance. Please help me continue the improvements made in last two years.

Steve Baker, CPA -Mayor Pro Tem, Chair of Finance & Admin, past Chair of Public Safety