

Let's use common sense to unite our country

Common sense. The Scientific Revolution began with famous individuals such as Copernicus and Galileo and led to the idea of thinking rationally: things should make sense.

By the 18th century, many of these rational thinkers began to question whether their governments and societies made sense; the Age of Enlightenment had merged with natural history. If science was good in the natural world, perhaps it could be good in society. Thomas Paine, an English immigrant, would go on to write his famous pamphlet entitled "Common Sense."

"In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense," he wrote.

Miracle of miracles, people read his pamphlet (even if it "Paine-d" them to do so). At the time, 70% of men and 40% of women in British America could read, the highest literacy level anywhere in the world. They read. They talked about what they read. They argued. They disagreed.

Was John Locke correct about government working on behalf of the citizens they governed? Were humans born with certain, God-given rights — the rights to liberty, equality and property? The ideas of John Locke were especially important for places such as the Carolinas, where he had helped to write the state's first constitution, the Fundamental Laws. Perhaps that is one key reason individual liberties (with a hypocritical caveat regarding slavery) have always resonated in this state.

Could we be rational? Did we have unalienable rights? I am arguing that the American independence movement was so revolutionary because it involved people sitting down (or standing up) and arguing with each other about whether things were being done in rational ways.

One of the most famous Normal Rockwell paintings, done in 1943 and entitled "Freedom of Speech," was of a town hall meeting with all eyes turned to one standing figure, addressing his fellow citizens. This painting has resonated so well with Americans because it stands for why we fought a revolution — the ability to rationally discuss our issues.

Was Montesquieu right when he said the commoners were being stripped of their rights by priests and nobles? Was Rousseau right when he argued the less government the better? And were Adam Smith and other liberal economists right when they began advocating a new approach to

economics, one that limited government regulations and monopolies?



Kim Richardson

My point is that the British colonists in America began to read and talk to each other. They disagreed with each other. They slowly reached a consensus on some arguments, and vehemently disagreed on others. The Fourth of July became a pivotal date in American history.

We all remember the story from our elementary school days. The French and Indian War in America (1754-63) led to an economic crisis for the British, who sought to restructure the tax codes and mercantilist restrictions. After all, having taken so much land from the French, they now had an empire, and empires cost money.

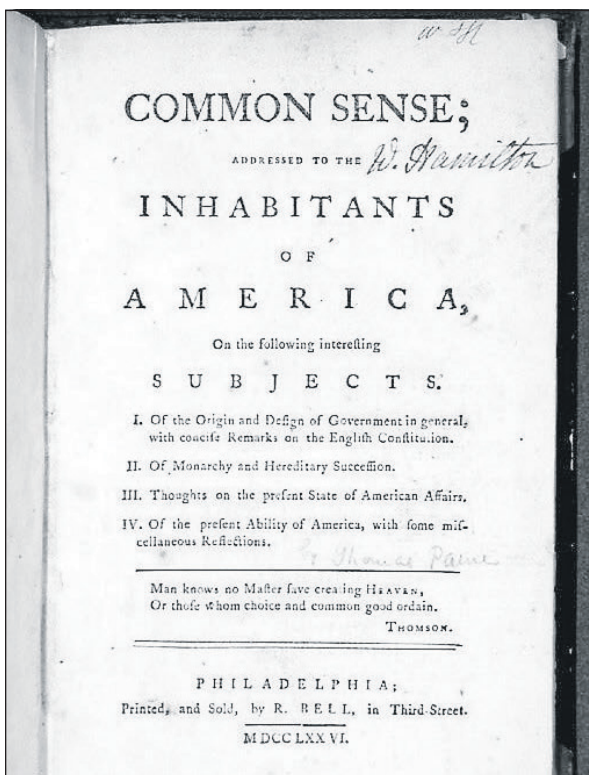
The British Parliament — equivalent to America's Congress — has the responsibility to raise taxes. In 1764, they sought to enforce the sugar tax by, ironically, lowering it and enforcing its collection. Colonists rioted. They then sought to place a tax on paper goods with a stamp. Colonists rioted. They then sought to spread out the taxes on items such as paper, glass and paint. Colonists rioted.

Why? This was a new age of literate or semi-literate people sitting down to ask whether these things made sense. Do we do this today? Do we sit down and ask whether what the few impose on the many makes sense? Oftentimes the answer is yes, but as often, the opposite is the case. We opposed taxes in part because nobody likes to pay taxes. But also because without representation in Parliament, we had not consented to a change in the tax system.

We must think rationally and be prepared to take a stand if the principles of the majority are trampled by the few. In our parents and grandparents' lifetimes, the world experienced what could happen when the majority were overwhelmed by the minority. Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Communist Russia all served as object lessons.

Jeremy Bentham, a 19th-century British philosopher, argued that sometimes we must limit the freedoms of the minority (not determined by race, gender or religion) for the benefit of the majority. The signs in restaurant restrooms which state workers must wash their hands prior to going back to work is a direct result of this. It is beneficial for the majority to have the minority wash their hands, not touch their noses or eat the food they are preparing, even if it limits the personal freedoms of those workers.

So, when Parliament ordered all tea purchased had to be



English immigrant Thomas Paine's "Common Sense," a 47-page pamphlet published in January 1776, made the case for independence from Britain, using common sense or rational thought as its basis.

through a specific entity in accordance with the laws of mercantilism (the Navigation Acts), we boarded the ships and threw the tea overboard. What a party that was. When Parliament closed the ports, we organized a meeting - a congress — to discuss just what we should do.

While we were analyzing the situation, attempting to come to a consensus, the British overplayed their hand, marching to the towns of Lexington and Concord in Massachusetts to confiscate caches of weapons and ammunition. If you were to visit the monument at Concord, you would see the following lines written by Ralph Waldo Emerson:

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood, Their flag to April's breeze unfurled, Here once the embattled farmers stood, And fired the shot heard round the world."

The Age of Revolution began with that shot. What the world heard was "We can sit down and discuss our differences rationally and come to a consensus for the majority."

On July 4, 1776, a committee led by Thomas Jefferson hashed out the lines of the Declaration of

Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." It goes on to say that governments derive their powers from the consent of the governed, the rights of the majority. If these rights are not secured, then "it is the Right of the People to alter or abolish it."

Last month, at the Union County Juneteenth celebration, the spokesperson said, "We come together in celebration not to divide, but to unite."

Let us unite this Independence Day by embracing our differences and coming to common consensus. Let those be, at the very least "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Let us open dialogues with those who choose different lifestyles and religions than us. We need not accept or convert, but we can come to a consensus about our unalienable rights and live in more perfect harmony.

Dr. Kim Richardson is an associate professor of history at the University of South Carolina Lancaster, where he has taught since 2008.

Promise Neighborhood is the real deal

While a USC Lancaster student, I had an opportunity to start an internship near campus with the help of Bridgett Plexico, USCL's internship coordinator.



Ava Baker

As I aspire to be a graphic designer, I wanted to get my foot in the door and begin interacting in my field and community. One of the most important aspects of design is understanding the demographic that you are reaching out to, thus I wanted to start a job that would allow me to do just that.

At the time, I had already completed an internship at an e-commerce company, however, I simply worked out of an office with little communication within the entire staff. I so wished to work in a communicative and collaborative environment that would allow me to see my work affect people around me.

Luckily, I found that at Lancaster Promise Neighborhood! I started my internship to help with my second-semester design classes since creating flyers and social media posts for a commercial purpose would not only allow me to understand my skills better, but also expand my understanding of design software. While it did so, my internship also provided me the avenue to experiment with styles, typefaces and layouts.

One thing that I did not know before starting my job was that even though the work toward getting the grant for Lancaster Promise Neighborhood was in progress for over a decade, the process of getting an office was new for everyone, including me.

Seeing my designs printed and handed out certainly changed my perspective of being a designer. Normally, you see working designers in an office surrounded by people who only work because they are assigned tasks, not because they want to see the effect it has.

As the lobby begins to fill up with flyers and pamphlets, the more I feel included within the team, which makes such a difference in me completing my work and the field in which I work.

All the members of the team make sure I feel included and want to ensure we all are getting every opportunity to engage with the leaders of the community and see the change through every event.

As time has gone on, I have been given more responsibilities, including maintaining consistency throughout all social media platforms and attending various events, such as kindergarten and fifth-grade graduations, company meetings and community luncheons.

I have gained a deep understanding of the community and the people that are a part of it, and through attending special events I have seen first-hand how Lancaster Promise Neighborhood is working with the community to bring transformation within a generation. This is why, when I was allowed to continue my internship through the summer, I took it.

The words "Whatever It Takes" aren't just a slogan but instead, it's a promise in which I am grateful to have been a part.

Ava Baker is a Rock Hill resident who is transferring from USC Lancaster to USC Columbia this fall.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Chapter 19, Article I, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Lancaster, South Carolina, that the Planning Commission of the City of Lancaster, South Carolina, is scheduled to hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, with the meeting to begin at 6:30 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall (216 S. Catawba Street), to consider the following proposed amendments to the Zoning Map & Ordinances of the City of Lancaster:

1. Rezoning: To confirm the zoning classification of B3-General Commercial for one parcel of land totaling 3.00 acres, recently annexed into the City of Lancaster, located in the general vicinity of 221 Monroe Highway-Lancaster, SC 29720. Property parcel is identified as tax map #: 0061-00-118.1 Owner(s) – Cindy Depaola
2. Rezoning: To confirm the zoning classification of B3-General Commercial for one parcel of land totaling 1.861 acres, located in the general vicinity of 1114 Lockwood Lane- Lancaster, SC 29720. Property parcel is identified as tax map #:0082-00-007.01 Owner(s) – Pro Auto Sales, LLC
3. Rezoning: To confirm the zoning classification of B3-General Commercial for one parcel of land totaling 7.7 acres, recently annexed into the City of Lancaster, located at 593 Highway 9 Bypass East- Lancaster, SC 29720. Property parcel is identified as tax map #: 0068-00-023.00 Owner(s) – Insite Lancaster, LLC
4. Rezoning: To confirm the zoning classification of R6-Residential for one parcel of land totaling 0.16 acres, recently annexed into the City of Lancaster, located at 1114 Skipper Avenue- Lancaster, SC 29720. Property parcel is identified by tax map #: 0081A-0N-017.00 Owner(s) – John Gay
5. Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment- Article IV, Division 2 Special Exceptions add new section 31-96 Heliports and section 31-311 new definitions for heliport and rotocraft. Applicant: MUSC Health Lancaster Medical Center

All interested persons are encouraged to appear and present their views either for or against these proposals. Additional information concerning these requests are available in the Office of Building and Zoning, 216 S. Catawba St, Lancaster, South Carolina, telephone 283-4253.

**Furthermore, to help reduce community spread of COVID-19 and or if unable to attend this meeting in person, you may submit written public comments to City Staff electronically at dstevenson@lancastercitysc.com by 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Your comments will be distributed to the members of the Commission.

Any person requiring special accommodations should contact the Building, Planning and Zoning Department at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Chapter 31, Article VIII, Division 2 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Lancaster, South Carolina, that the Board of Zoning Appeals of the City of Lancaster, South Carolina, will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, July 17 for the purpose of obtaining oral and/or written comments from the public concerning the following:

1. Variance Request - Application submitted by Josh Courtright dba JCPM Property Group. Subject property is located @ 214 Datura Way (Tax Map # 00680-0X-001.03) and is presently zoned R-6 Residential. The applicant is requesting a 10' rear setback variance to allow for placement of a single-family dwelling.

The Public Hearing will be held at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, 216 S. Catawba Street. All interested persons are encouraged to appear and present their views either for or against this proposal. Additional information concerning this request is available in the Office of Building Official, 216 S. Catawba Street, Lancaster, South Carolina, @ 803.283.4253. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the Building, Planning and Zoning Department at least twenty-four hours prior to the meeting.