

THE JUSTICE TRUST

Carl Shaw has contacted GroundSwell that he is still interested in attracting people to settle on his place as lessees on a Georgist type land trust. He wrote a set of By-Laws, directions of how it would be operated, nominated a group of Board of Directors, registered the property with the Secretary of State, and advertised to attract interested folks. But he is still looking for takers.

He is looking for advice on how to attract lessees. He writes GroundSwell as follows:

"The Justice Trust, a Georgist, private land community located in central Calhoun County, West Virginia, is seeking residents who wish to self develop a plot of leased land, erect their home, and live among others of the same persuasion. The Trust will lease a plot for 99 years, residents will pay whatever is deemed to be the local current amount prevalent for this neighborhood. (Ex., one acre seems to be leasing for about \$50.00 per year.) Of course, our administration will constantly attempt to ascertain any increases in land values, and then charge lessees an increase in their annual rental fee. Lessee will be responsible for county imposed property taxes on any improvement. Our administration will hold all lessees' rents in a fund to be used for annual county land taxes, and any remainder shall be used for public benefits.

"The Trust will attempt to copy goals and methods employed by Fairhope, AL, which has been in business since 1894. Fairhope has been successful at attracting residents, as over 10,000 have moved there since 1980."

A previous article by Carl Shaw on his land trust was published in the May-July 2015 GroundSwell: Wanted: A Solid Georgist to Manage My Enclave of Economic Rent, The Justice Trust, here in Calhoun County, West Virginia. (http://commonground-usa.net/shaw-carl_wanted-a-solid-georgist-2015-may-jul.pdf) Selected excerpts follow:

"The property is located at 1019 Kerby Ridge Road, Mount Zion, WV 26151 on a 1 ½ mile long dirt-gravel road, currently bull-dozed, and passable all year long. We are located about 10 miles south of Grantsville, WV, the County Seat.... Currently on Kerby Ridge Road, there are 5 other residents, all senior citizens. There are several gas-oil wells in this neighborhood, two on my property... We are 20 miles east of Spencer, WV (local Walmart) , 30 miles west of Glenville, WV where Glenville State College is located. Parkersburg is 50 miles north west of this Trust.... This Justice Trust is on 80 acres of hilly forested land. There are about 2 or 3 acres of tillable land, which may be sufficient for 7 or 8 families...

"The current primary responsibility of managing will be to recruit or attract people to come join and live here. Get them settled on a site, register their plot at the Calhoun Co. Court House. A brief fundamental economics course to explain the basic economics of land rent taxation should be offered. They will sign a 99 year lease, which will allow sale of their buildings when lessee moves, or to pass on to others at death of lessee. Lessees will pay the annual land rent, approximately \$5.00 per acre per month, (continued on p. 6)

THE JUSTICE TRUST (from page 5)

as annually appraised by a responsible panel. Under NO circumstances should lessees be granted a "bargain" annual land lease fee. Lessee may construct residence, or business improvement, pay any improvement taxes imposed to the Trust, who will in turn pay all property taxes to the County Sheriff. Calhoun Co. property taxes on land have been running at about \$2.00 per acre per year, so any "profit" will be deposited in savings for future maintenance

"The property is officially listed with the West Virginia Secretary of State as a Trust. They have been charging an annual fee of \$25.00...

"The garden area has produced much fruits and vegetables, including 6 apple trees, 3 pear , 3 peach, and previously some plum and apricot

"I hired a real estate attorney to write a Lease Form, which conforms to WV laws. "This trust will be open to lower income type people, and minorities..."

"If any of this sounds interesting please call me at (304) 354-6598, or write me at 1019 Kerby Ridge Road, Mount Zion, WV 26151. Email CFSHAW@Frontiernet.net"

(Editor's note: Carl Shaw ran for a seat on the Board of Directors of Common Ground USA in 2010. Here is some additional biographical information about him:

Resides in Mt. Zion, WV. Born, raised Detroit, MI, he took all three Henry George School Social Science courses, 1951—1953. He taught intro. course P&P several cycles, late '50's early '60's. He was an active member of the former West Virginia chapter of Common Ground-USA. Shaw earned BS & MS degrees at Wayne State University in Instrumental Music Education. Taught public school music in Colorado and Michigan. Played Clarinet in 49 states, Canada, Austria, and VI, in 3 army bands, retired from Army Field Band. Took 16 seminars and courses (concluded on page 15)

THE JUSTICE TRUST (from page 6)

in real estate appraisal and assessment. Worked as appraiser for WV State Tax Dept. Authors periodical essays analyzing current economic conditions from a Georgist perspective (some published in GroundSwell) and gets letters to the editor published. Finance Com. Co-chair of the non-partisan volunteer West Virginia Silver Haired Legislature (whose delegates are elected at county senior centers). In process of establishing non-profit, intentional Georgist community on his land. Ran 5K race in 35min. on 80th birthday Sept. 2009.) <<

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