



7/10/08

Mayor, council smearing peer

I write to defend Long Branch Councilman Brian Unger from the scurrilous attack on his good name and reputation. For 26 years, Unger has contributed his time and talents to preserve the city's beaches and ocean, its historic and recreational places dating back to the 19th century and its residents' quality of life. He cares about the future of Long Branch as the jewel of the Jersey Shore, a community of diverse neighborhoods.

Mayor Adam Schneider and his allies on the City Council have embarked on a smear campaign against Unger. They have used an innocuous remark he made, and apologized for, to divert attention from the serious problems affecting our city's residents. These range from the seizure of working people's homes through the perverse application of eminent domain, outrageous tax increases, filthy residential streets and commercial districts, and now a conflict of interest scandal involving internal manipulations for a commercial developer.

Schneider's administration does not pay enough attention to the real problems and concerns of the working families, residential neighborhoods, elderly and minorities who make up the bulk of our city's population. I appreciate Pier Village for what it is, but it seems the current administration focuses on that area to the neglect of the rest of the city and our needs.

When someone rocks the boat of a political machine such as Schneider's, they come at you with the kind of brutal personal smear campaigns that made Karl Rove infamous. It is despicable to have this in Long Branch.

We need to stop these kinds of campaigns by our elected officials. They are a diversion from real issues and a disservice to the public. Please come to city council meetings and make your voices heard.

Austin Gelzer

LONG BRANCH