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POLITICIANS BEWARE – ‘NIMBYs’ ARE EVERYWHERE

-- Liberal and Conservative, Democrat and Republican: The Politics of ‘Not In My Back Yard’ is a ‘Rainbow Coalition’ --

HINGHAM, MA – October 10, 2007 – Politicians are playing with fire if they buy into the common stereotype of ‘Not In My Back Yard’ voters as Starbucks-drinking, suburban, liberals.

Education and income can be indicators of how some Americans view local real estate development proposals, but opposition to hometown development projects runs across political party preference and ideology, the 2007 Saint Index nationwide survey shows.

Conducted by The Saint Consulting Group, an international land use politics consultancy, The Saint Index interviews with 1,000 American adults nationwide. The Index was conducted during the third quarter of 2007, and is the first of its kind to quantify and track the politics of land use, spotlighting who actively opposes and supports real estate-related projects and why.

Despite frequent criticism of the NIMBY attitude, the sentiment toward local development projects is increasing. Seventy-eight percent of Americans now believe there should be no new development in their hometown, saying their community is fine the way it is or already over-developed. Opposition to local development is up 5 percent after holding steady at 73 percent the previous two years.

Among the other key survey findings:

- Hillary Clinton is a clear presidential favorite.
- “NIMBYs” come from all walks of life.

- Americans are far more willing to fight than support local development projects.

Solid Support for Hillary

Answering an open-ended question about which candidate they'd like to see elected president, respondents chose Senator Clinton by a margin of better than 2-1 over her nearest competition. The results:

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>% Preferring</u>
Clinton	21
Obama	9
Giuliani	6
Thompson	3
Edwards	3
Romney	2
McCain	2
Any Republican	4
Any Democrat	3
Undecided	20

Patrick Fox, president of Saint Consulting Group and a veteran of numerous political campaigns, noted, "These numbers are significant because the question simply asks who voters would prefer. For Senator Clinton, it's very good news because significantly more voters at this early stage identify her as their candidate than any other."

"NIMBYs" Unmasked

Politically, an overwhelming 89 percent of Americans say a candidate's position on growth is important at election time.

So who are these people opposing development projects? Whether you call them "NIMBYs" (Not in My Backyard), "BANANAs" (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anyone) or CAVE persons (Citizens Against Virtually Everything), the most surprising thing about these passionate citizens is that they come from all walks of life.

The 2007 Saint Index clearly shows that "NIMBYs" tend to be non-partisan. Of those people who reported opposing a development project in his or her community, they are

only slightly more liberal (28 percent) than moderate and conservative (both 22 percent), and they are more or less equally Democrat, Republican or 'other.'

Although NIMBYs are typically non-partisan, their activity levels vary according to geography and project type. For example, the West, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic are the most challenging environments for developers, regardless of project type, with the South and Midwest more welcoming.

The most active NIMBYs among us are aged 56-65, home owners, college educated or post-graduate educated, suburbanites and have household annual incomes over \$100,000.

One-quarter of Americans (24 percent) say they or a family member have actively opposed development. The most active among us are aged 56—65 (30%), college educated or post grad educated (29% and 30% respectively), wealthy households of over \$100K (29%), suburbanite (28%), west coasters (30%) and liberal (28%).

When asked what retailer they'd most like to see come to their community, the overwhelming answer was "none" (24%) followed by "we have everything we need" (10%).

The main reasons Americans give for opposing development in their communities are protecting community character (31 percent), protecting the environment (22 percent), and traffic (21 percent). Just 10 percent cited protecting their own real estate values — but that relatively low response may not be an accurate gauge of how big a role that factor actually plays in opposition to development.

"By probing to uncover the reasons for opposition through differently phrased questions over the years and examining the response, we've come to the conclusion that the real reason Americans oppose development is self-interest," said Patrick Fox, president of The Saint Consulting Group, the international land use political consultancy that created The Saint Index. "They are protecting their own real estate values."

Politics of Opposition

Of those people who reported opposing a development project in his or her community, they are only slightly more liberal than moderate and conservative, and they are more or less equally Democrat, Republican or Other.

The following tables illustrate the breakdown of responses according to idealism and party preference of those who have opposed development projects in his or her community.

Idealism			
	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Yes	28%	22%	22%
No	71%	77%	77%
Don't Know	1%	1%	1%

Party Preference			
	Mostly Democrat, Lean Democrat or Independent Voter in Democratic Primary	Mostly Republican, Lean Republican or Independent Voter in Republican Primary	Other
Yes	24%	25%	27%
No	75%	75%	71%
Don't Know	1%	1%	1%

Further evidence suggests that Nimbys tend to be non-partisan. Let's take a look at the percentage of each candidate's supporters who have opposed development projects in his or her community and the political leanings of all the candidate's supporters. While there are some seemingly significant differences between the percentages of those people opposing development projects among a few candidates, there seems to be no correlation between the percentages among all candidates or their political bases.

Presidential Preference				
	Who would you most like to see elected president?	Percent that has opposed a development project in his/her community	Democrat, Lean Democrat or Independent Voter in Democratic Primary	Republican, Lean Republican or Independent Voter in Republican Primary
Hillary Clinton	21%	28%	76%	11%
Undecided	20%	18%	32%	37%
Barack Obama	9%	29%	76%	15%
Rudy Giuliani	6%	16%	8%	82%
A Republican (non-specific)	4%	26%	0%	100%
Fred Thompson	3%	30%	3%	76%
A Democrat (non-specific)	3%	33%	0%	97%
John Edwards	3%	27%	61%	19%
Mitt Romney	2%	30%	12%	82%
John McCain	2%	32%	10%	74%
Don't know	11%	21%	31%	39%

Other Interesting Findings:

- One-quarter of all Americans have opposed a development project, twice as many as have supported one.
- When asked what type of new development they'd like to see in their community, one in three Americans said "none," by far the most popular choice.
- Seventy percent of Americans believe that the relationship between developers and officials makes the development process unfair.

- When asked what national retailer they'd most like to see in their community, one in three Americans said 'None' or 'We have everything we need.'
- Opposition to new development in their communities, by region: New England, 84 percent; West, 83 percent; Mid-Atlantic, 81 percent; South, 74 percent; Midwest, 73 percent.

The Saint Index was created by The Saint Consulting Group in conjunction with the University of Massachusetts' Center for Economic and Civic Opinion. This year's survey was performed by The Logit Group between the dates of August 1 and August 10, 2007. One thousand respondents were randomly selected from the United States, including Alaska and Hawaii. The maximum margin of error is plus or minus 3.1 percent at the 95 percent confidence interval nationwide.

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About The Saint Consulting Group

The Saint Consulting Group began operations in 1983 and today is the global leader in land use political consultancy. Saint has 13 offices around the U.S. and international offices in London and Toronto. As experts in land use politics, Saint Consulting provides political campaign expertise to win complex or controversial planning decisions. Among the property sectors that use its services are: aggregates, food retail, shopping centers, hospitals, landfill, mixed-use developers, housing, and utilities.

The Saint Index[®] is the first and only annual primary research tool that quantifies and tracks the politics of land use, spotlighting who actively opposes and supports real estate projects and why.

The Saint Consulting Group is happy to run customized reports for journalists, that focus on your beat, whether your interest is specific to a region, property type, demographic or other area. Executives from The Saint Consulting Group are available for interviews, and we are happy to generate customized graphics for publication on an as-needed basis. Additional detailed information, raw data and data analysis is also available upon request, as it relates to your coverage.