

Michael Grannis – Platforms at the Podium

Do you think our main street/downtown is healthy and successful? If not, what would you do to change that? If yes, why?

YES TO A POINT! WE'VE SEEN SEVERAL NEW BUSINESSES COME TO OUR DOWNTOWN OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS SUCH AS THE YELLOW HOUSE, BOULEVARD WEST, PATTY CAKES, CORKED & UNTAPPED, THE DESIGN HAUS, THE QUEEN'S COURT, THE CROWING HEN, EPIC AX AND THE CRAZY COMET CREAMER, TO NAME A FEW. AND WE HAVE THREE NEW BUSINESSES HOPEFULLY OPENING BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. THE CARDINAL, L'LL HOMBRE AND CRAWFORD'S. WE'VE ALSO SEEN THE EXPANSION OF THREE LITTLE BIRDS AND NANCY JOE'S HOMEMADE.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE MORE "DOWNSTAIRS COMMERCIAL/RETAIL WITH UPSTAIRS RESIDENTIAL.

HOWEVER WE NEED TO CONTINUE DOWNTOWN GROWTH WITH MORE RETAIL, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME KEEP CLAYTON'S DOWNTOWN CHARM. TO ME THE "DOWNTOWN CHARM" IS VITALLY IMPORTANT. OUR DOWNTOWN IS VERY UNIQUE AND I WANT TO MAINTAIN THAT UNIQUENESS.

How do you feel about the transportation options currently available in our city? Do we have enough options? If not, what will you do to increase those?

WE ARE WHOLLY BEHIND WITH LOCAL CLAYTON TRANSPORTATION IN OUR COMMUNITY. CURRENTLY THE ONLY TRUE METHOD OF TRANSPORTATION IN OUR COMMUNITY IS CAB (WHICH IS VERY POOR AT BEST) AND JACATS, THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY & SENIOR SERVICES OF JOHNSTON COUNTY ORGANIZATION AND JOHNSTON COUNTY. UBER AND LYFT ALSO OPERATE IN CLAYTON

THE TOWN COUNCIL, THE TOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AND THE TOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT MUST COME TOGETHER AND DEVELOP A VIABLE SOLUTION TO THIS DELIMMA FOR TOWN TRANSPORTATION, ESPECIALLY FOR OUR SENIORS, FOLKS WITHOUT ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION AND OUR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES. AND I THINK WE NEED TO INCLUDE A CITIZENS COMMITTEE TO JOIN IN THOSE DISCUSSIONS.

Some people in our community say that we have traffic problems. What do you think? How would you mitigate those concerns or change the situation?

I HAVE TO AGREE. BUT THIS IS A VERY COMPLEX PROBLEM AND NOT EASILY SOLVED. CLAYTON IS GROWING AT AN ALARMING RATE FOR A FEW DIFFERENT REASONS. 1) WAKE COUNTY, DURHAM COUNTY AND ORANGE COUNTY LAND VALUES ARE MUCH HIGHER THAN JOHNSTON COUNTY LAND VALUES. THIS DRIVES DEVELOPERS TO OUR COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY SINCE CLAYTON IS THE NEAREST JOHNSTON COUNTY MUNICIPALITY TO RALEIGH AND SURROUNDING AREAS; 2) THERE IS MUCH "AVAILABLE" LAND TO BE HAD IN CLAYTON, CLAYTON'S "EXTRA TERRITORIAL JURISDICTION" AND SURROUNDING AREAS; 3) CLAYTON HAS VERY LIMITED REASONS, ESPECIALLY LEGALLY, TO REFUSE DEVELOPMENT. 4) IF A DEVELOPER SUBMITS AN APPLICATION TO THE CLAYTON PLANNING DEPARTMENT, AND THAT APPLICANT COMPLIES WITH ALL THE STATE STATUTES, ALL THE TOWN

CODES AND ORDINANCES, FALLS INTO THE REQUIRED GROWTH PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMPLIES WITH ALL THE "QUASI JUDICIAL" REQUIREMENTS, IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO NOT APPROVE THEIR DEVELOPMENT.

MANY OF THE FEEDER HIGHWAYS TO DEVELOPMENTS ARE "NCDOT" OWNED AND MAINTAINED HIGHWAYS. BUT THE NCDOT AND THE TOWN REQUIRE CERTIFIED TRAFFIC STUDIES TO BE PERFORMED BEFORE ANY DEVELOPMENT IS SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL. THE TOWN CANNOT OVERRIDE OR ADD REQUIREMENTS ABOVE WHAT THE NCDOT REQUIRES AT THIS MOMENT IN TIME.

THIS IS A SITUATION THAT I THINK REQUIRES FURTHER DISCUSSION AMONG THE TOWN COUNCIL, VARIOUS MEMBERS OF TOWN STAFF, NCDOT, DEVELOPERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE THIS SITUATION.

There have been discussions that the current development review process is broken and needs to be modified or replaced. As a councilmember, how would you weigh into this issue to determine what policies and procedures need to be reviewed?

IF THE QUESTION REFERS TO THE "TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE" I'M NOT CONVINCED THE PROCESS IS "BROKEN AS YOU SAY, BUT THERE CERTAINLY "GAPS" AND PROBLEMS IN THE PROCESS THAT MAKE IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO GET THROUGH. ALSO THE PROCESS TAKES MUCH TOO LONG. THE PROCESS NEEDS A "MAKEOVER."

I THINK THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES THAT NEED TO OCCUR. 1) TO MY KNOWLEDGE THERE IS NO ONE INDIVIDUAL TO ACT AS A "PROJECT MANAGER" FOR APPLICANT AND STAFF. A PERSON (PROJECT MANAGER) NEEDS TO BE INCORPORATED THAT KNOWS THE PROJECT WELL AND HAS PROACTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH THE APPLICANT AND STAFF. 2) THIS PERSON WOULD COMMUNICATE WITH STAFF AND HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE FOR "ON TIME" COMMENTS AND RESPONSES; 2) THIS PERSON WOULD INSURE DELIVERABLES ARE OCCURRING ON TIME FROM BOTH STAFF AND THE APPLICANT; 3) THIS PERSON MUST BE KNOWLEDGIBLE WITH STATE STATUTES AND TOWN ORDINANCES AND 4) THIS PERSON MUST WORK ON BOTH SIDES TO INSURE EACH SIDE IS PROPERLY VETTING THE APPLICANTS PROJECT AND DO SO TIMELY BEFORE RESUBMISSIONS; 5) THIS PERSON MUST ADHERE TO A TIMELY SCHEDULE.

WE ALSO NEED TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT ADDING ORDINANCE OR OTHER REQUIREMENTS THAT EXCEED THE STATUTE REQUIREMENTS. I DO NOT THINK THIS IS SOMETHING THE TOWN WANTS TO DO.

How do you plan to involve residents in the decision-making process in our town?

THIS IS DONE TODAY WITH VARIOUS CITIZEN VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES SUCH AS THE 1) LIBRARY COMMITTEE; 2) THE PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE; 3) THE PUBLIC ARTS ADVISORY BOARD; 4) THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION; 5) THE PLANNING BOARD AND 6) THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT TO NAME A FEW. ALSO, WHEN REQUIRED THE TOWN SOLICITS CITIZENS TO BE ON SUCH COMMITTEES AS THE 1) 2045 COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH PLAN COMMITTEE; 2) THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE REWRITE AND 3) THE DOWNTOWN PARKING COMMITTEE AMONG OTHERS.

I CERTAINLY WANT TO CONTINUE THIS PROCESS. WE MUST INCLUDE OUR CITIZENS IN THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS BY SEEKING THEIR THOUGHTS AND IDEAS. THEY ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE SOLUTION AND MOST IMPORTANTLY THEY LIVE IN OUR COMMUNITY AND HAVE IMPORTANT INPUT.

ALSO I OFTEN REACH OUT TO CITIZENS TO GET THEIR TAKE ON VARIOUS ISSUES THAT COME BEFORE THE TOWN COUNCIL BECAUSE THEIR INPUT IS IMPORTANT TO ME.

If you received a \$1 million grant to use for the city any way you wanted, what would you do with it and why?

I WOULD RENOVATE OUR DOWNTOWN LIBRARY WHICH IS IN NEED OF RENOVATION AND ADDITIONAL SPACE. THE LIBRARY SERVES SO MANY NEEDS BEGINNING WITH OUR YOUNG CHILDREN ALL THE WAY TO OUR SENIOR POPULATION. JOY GARRETSON AND HER STAFF DO AN INCREDIBLE JOB WITH PROGRAMMING FOR ALL AGES BUT THE LIBRARY NEEDS TO EXPAND, AND ONE MILLION DOLLARS WOULD GO A LONG WAY TO ENHANCE THE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES THAT ARE SO DEARLY NEEDED IN OUR COMMUNITY.

What neighborhood do you live in? Why? Where are your favorite places to spend time in our town?

BETSY AND I PRETTY MUCH LIVED IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN AT 507 E. 2ND STREET, BETTER KNOWN AS THE "MORNING GLORY INN." WE WERE THERE FOR 17 YEARS. I RETIRED AND SHE SEMI-RETIRED (WE STILL OWN THE INN AND RUN IT AS AN AIR B & B) AND WE RELOCATED TO THE WALK AT EAST VILLAGE BECAUSE WE WANTED TO BE CLOSE TO DOWNTOWN. WE LOVE DOWNTOWN AND THERE ARE MANY PLACES WE FREQUENT ON A REGULAR BASIS, BUT IF I MUST PICK ONE, I WILL SAY THE CLAYTON STEAKHOUSE (AND I AM NOT THE LEAST BIT BIAS). BETSY AND I OPENED THE STEAKHOUSE IN 2008 AND SOLD IT TO TWO OF OUR EMPLOYEES IN 2019, BOBBI BUCKLER AND RYAN RUBRIGHT. THEY HAVE TRULY CARRIED ON THE TRADITION WE HAD HOPED FOR AND WE COULD NOT BE MORE PROUD OF THEM AND THEIR SUCCESS.

What is your thought/plan to steps will you take to keep Clayton's "Small-Town Charm" while we continue to grow at such a rapid pace?

I CONSIDER DOWNTOWN CLAYTON "SACRED." ASIDE FROM THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE, DOWNTOWN IS THE OTHER REASON WE MOVED BACK HERE IN 2003 AFTER A THREE YEAR ABSENCE. THERE IS AN AMBIENCE ABOUT DOWNTOWN. IT IS UNIQUE AND IT CALLS YOU TO COME AND BE THERE.

EVEN BEFORE I WAS ELECTED TO THE TOWN COUNCIL I WAS INVOLVED IN THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, AND AT THAT TIME IT WAS WAINING. I WAS ABLE TO AT LEAST GET THE THEN TOWN MANAGER TO REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE THE ASSOCIATION WAS TO DOWNTOWN. ULTIMATELY HE ALLOWED THE TOWN TO SUBSIDIZE THE ASSOCIATION AND AS WE ALL KNOW IT HAS BECOME AN IMPORTANT TOWN VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE THAT HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDING OUT OVER \$270,000 THROUGH THE YEARS FOR FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS FOR DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES.

WE MUST CONTINUE THE HERITAGE OF KEEPING DOWNTOWN A DESTINATION BY CONTINUING TO KEEP OUR "OLD DOWNTOWN" FEEL WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ENCOURAGING NEW BUSINESS TO SET THEIR ROOTS IN DOWNTOWN. WE'VE DONE A PRETTY GOOD JOB UP TO NOW BUT WE MUST CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN OUR "SMALL TOWN CHARM.

Are you for or against tax increases to improve the transportation infrastructure in order to make it easier and faster for people to travel for work and play?

I AM IN FAVOR OF A TAX INCREASE, BUT NOT A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE. I AM IN FAVOR OF A SALES TAX INCREASE OF EITHER A ¼ CENT OR MAYBE A ½ CENT SALES TAX INCREASE THAT WOULD BE DEDICATED TO IMPROVE OUR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE FOR BOTH BUS RAPID TRANSIT AND LATER FOR COMUTER RAIL. SUCH A TAX WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE TO BE APPROVED BY THE CLAYTON TOWN COUNCIL AND THE JOHNSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.

CLAYTON AND JOHNSTON COUNTY HAVE PARTNERED WITH "GO TRIANGLE," VARIOUS MUNICIPALITIES IN THE BUS AND RAIL CORRIDOR AND THREE REGIONAL METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS TO STUDY "BUS RAPID TRANSIT" AND "COMMUTER RAIL" AS A REGIONAL SOLUTION TO GET FOLKS TO SURROUNDING AREAS SUCH AS GARNER, RALEIGH, RTP, DURHAM AND THE AIRPORT.

How will you, as a councilmember, ensure that you're following best practices for council/staff interactions, for introduction of new items onto council agendas, and for leadership recruitment and evaluation?

I ALWAYS TRY TO FOLLOW THE LEAGUE OF MUNICIPALITIES AND THE NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR SUCH INTERACTIONS. THOSE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE THE EXPERTISE OF WHICH TO DRAW FROM. IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE NOT TO DRAW ON THAT EXPERIENCE.

IN MOST INSTANCES I REACH OUT TO OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS, SEEKING THEIR INPUT ABOUT VARIOUS ISSUES THAT I MAY WANT TO INCLUDE ON COUNCIL AGENDAS FOR DISCUSSION.

ANYTIME I WANT TO DISCUSS AN ISSUE WITH A STAFF MEMBER I ALWAYS INCLUDE THE TOWN MANAGER IN CORRESPONDENCE SO HE IS AWARE OF MY INTERACTIONS WITH THE STAFF MEMBER.

LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT AT THE STAFF LEVEL IS USUALLY THE TOWN MANAGERS CALL. THERE ARE TIMES WHERE THE TOWN MANAGER MAY INCULDE A COUNCIL MEMBER ON AN INTERVIEW TEAM FOR A STAFF POSITION. I AM FINE WITH THIS PROCESS MOST OF THE TIME.

AT THIS TIME THERE IS NO SET FORMAT OR ORDINANCE THAT REQUIRES A SPECIFIC PROCESS TO RECRUIT A TOWN MANAGER. IN YEARS PAST WHEN THE MANAGERS POSITION WAS OPEN USUALLY THERE IS A CONSULTANT THAT IS HIRED TO GUIDE THE PROCESS FOR RECRUITMENT FOR THE POSITION.

If elected, what would be your main priority for the Town of Clayton? What are your priorities for your term as a Council member?

THERE ARE 5 AND NOT NECESSARILY IN THE NOTED ORDER:

1) BE FINANCIALLY AND FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE WITH THE TAX PAYERS DOLLARS.

2) ALWAYS LISTEN TO CITIZENS AND HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY AND THEN ALWAYS RESPOND TO THEM. ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS WITH THE CORRECT ANSWERS. THEY MAY NOT LIKE THE ANSWER BUT IT WILL BE THE CORRECT ANSWER.

3) FOLLOW THE NEW WATER TREATMENT PLANT TO COMPLETION.

4) REWORK THE TECHNICAL REVIEW PROCESS

5) PUBLIC SAFETY – POLICE, FIRE AND EMS

*****TOP PRIORITY – BE FINANCIALLY AND FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE WITH TAX PAYER DOLLARS!**

As a Council member, how will you work with NCDOT and Johnston County schools to address traffic and school capacity issues?

FIRST NCDOT – TRAFFIC IS AN ISSUE, BUT THERE IS A PROCESS FOR ALL DEVELOPMENT TO FOLLOW, BOTH RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL. THERE ARE STATE STATUTES AND VARIOUS MUNICIPAL ORDINANCES THAT MUST BE FOLLOWED DURING THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ALL DEVELOPMENT. IT IS THE STAFFS RESPONSIBILITY TO INSURE THAT THE CRITERIA IS FOLLOWED AND THEY DO A GOOD JOB TO INSURE THE CRITERIA IS FOLLOWED.

I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACCOMPANY OUR TOWN MANAGER AND/OR STAFF MEMBERS TO A FEW MEETINGS WITH NCDOT REPRESENTATIVES THAT PERTAINED SPECIFICALLY TO CLAYTON.

I AM THE TOWN'S CURRENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE CAPITAL AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION. AS A RESULT I DO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS VARIOUS ISSUES WITH OUR NCDOT DISTRICT

REPRESENTATIVE.

SECOND JOHNSTON COUNTY SCHOOLS – SCHOOL CAPACITY IS AN ISSUE BUT THE TOWN HAS LITTLE OR NO CONTROL OVER THIS ISSUE. THE JOHNSTON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD HAS A REPRESENTATIVE SEAT AT THE TOWN'S TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETINGS WHICH WORK WITH APPLICANTS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENTS. THIS PROCESS IS THE SECOND STAGE FOR AN APPLICANT TO MOVE THEIR DEVELOPMENT FORWARD. FROM THIS POINT IN THE PROCESS IT CAN TAKE THREE TO FIVE OR SIX YEARS TO COMPLETE SUCH A DEVELOPMENT. I SAY THIS BECAUSE THE SCHOOL BOARD IS IN ON THE VERY EARLY STAGES OF WHAT MIGHT BE COMING TO CLAYTON DEVELOPMENT WISE AND THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAN ACCORDINGLY.

THE SCHOOL BOARD ALSO EMPLOYS NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY TO ASSIST IN DETERMINING THE BEST LOCATION FOR SCHOOLS IN JOHNSTON COUNTY. THIS IS DONE UTILIZING A DETAILED STUDY OF NUMEROUS PIECES OF INFORMATION PECULIAR TO JOHNSTON COUNTY.

The Town of Clayton is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Growth Plan. I felected, how will you make sure the goals of the plan will be implemented?

THIS IS THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PLANNING STAFF, ENGINEERING STAFF AND THE TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE. HOWEVER I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PROACTIVE AND INTERACTIVE IN ASSURING WE AS A TOWN ARE FOLLOWING THE CRITERIA DEVELOPED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE GROWTH PLAN. I'M NOT SAYING WE DO A PERFECT JOB BUT WE DO A VERY GOOD JOB OF FOLLOWING THE PLAN.

I'VE ALSO BEEN BLESSED WITH BEING A COMMITTEE MEMBER ON THE LAST THREE GROWTH PLAN UPDATES. AND THOSE COMMITTEES HAVE DONE SOME REALLY GOOD WORK.

THESE COMMITTEES ARE COMPRISED OF CITIZENS, STAFF, COUNCIL MEMBER OR MEMBERS AND CONSULTANTS.

The recreation bond and the projects it was to implement hasn't received much attention and is rarely discussed publically. Do you know where it stands, what has been implemented and what is left to do?

I ADMIT THE BOND ACTIVITY GOT OFF TO A SLOW START EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE VARIOUS PROCESSES THAT WERE TO BE FOLLOWED. BUT THIS IS NO EXCUSE. WE COULD HAVE BEEN MORE EXPEDICIOUS AND FURTHER ALONG.

PHASE 1 - THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT MUNICIPAL PARK WILL BE THE FIRST PARK TO SEE IMPROVEMENTS. AND I AM TOLD THAT THE

“DESIGN/BUILD” CONTRACT HAS BEEN SIGNED AND WORK IS TO START IN THE NOVEMBER 2021 TIME. TARGET FOR COMPLETION IS SCHEDULED FOR JUNE/JULY 2022.

PHASE 2 - EAST CLAYTON PARK IMPROVEMENTS ARE SCHEDULED TO BEGIN IN FEBRUARY/MARCH 2022 AND WILL BE A DESIGN/BID/BUILD CONTRACT. THE EXPECTED COMPLETION TIME FRAME IS SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022.

PHASE 3 – COMMUNITY PARK ARE EXPECTED TO START IN EARLY 2023.

How will you support the town plans for improvements in cultural offerings (from departments like the Clayton Center and the Library, as well as the DDA, Public Art Advisory Board, etc.?)

CLAYTON CENTER – I’VE ALWAYS SUPPORTED THE CLAYTON CENTER, BOTH AS A SEASON TICKET HOLDER FOR 16 YEARS, AND ALSO AS A COUNCILMAN.

I’VE ALWAYS SOLICITED FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE CENTER IN ORDER TO ENHANCE BOTH THE VENUE AND THE ENTERTAINMENT.

SCOTTY HENLEY AND HIS TEAM HAVE DONE A REMARKABLE JOB THROUGH THE YEARS AND I AM VERY PROUD OF OUR CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS.

LIBRARY – EXPANSION IS REQUIRED. A QUESTION WAS ASKED ABOUT “WHAT I WOULD DO WITH A MILLION DOLLAR GRANT”? I WOULD RENOVATE THE LIBRARY AND ADD SQUARE FOOTAGE HOWEVER POSSIBLE. JOY GARRETSON AND HER TEAM HAVE DONE AN INCREDIBLE JOB WITH THEIR PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES. I AM VERY PROUD OF WHAT THEY HAVE DONE

DDA - \$270,000+ HAVE BEEN GIVEN IN FAÇADE GRANTS TO DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES. WE NEED TO KEEP IT UP. AND THE DDA WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING OUR CONCERTS AND MOVIES AT TOWN SQUARE. WHAT TERRIFIC EVENTS. THE COUNCIL MUST CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE DDA NEEDS.

PUBLIC ARTS ADVISORY BOARD – OUR MAYOR JODY McLEOD HAD A VISION OF CLAYTON AS AN ARTS COMMUNITY AND THIS BOARD BROUGHT THAT VISION TO LIFE. THEY HAVE DONE AN INCREDIBLE JOB OVER THE YEARS BY BRINGING SOME REALLY TERRIFIC SCULPTURES TO OUR COMMUNITY. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!!!

How will you remain accessible to the public after the election?

I’VE ALWAYS MADE MYSELF ACCESSIBLE TO THE CLAYTON CITIZENS. BY EMAIL, PHONE AND FACE TO FACE. I REPRESENT THEM AND I HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO BE AVAILABLE TO THEM WHENEVER, WHEREVER. I WORK

FOR THEM SO I NEED TO BE AVAILABLE TO THEM. WE MAY NOT ALWAYS AGREE WITH EACH OTHER BUT I RESPECT THEIR CONCERNS. I AM A GOOD LISTENER BUT I REALLY HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY.

“THE MARK OF A PERSON’S LEADERSHIP ABILITY LIES NOT IN WHAT HE SAYS HE WILL DO, BUT ... IN WHAT HE SAYS HE WILL DO AND GETS DONE.”

Do you think the Town Council has a role in the development review process?

YES, BUT I THINK MORE COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT IS REQUIRED. CURRENTLY THE COUNCIL HAS THE FINAL DECISION MAKING ROLL ON 1) TWEXT AMENDMENTS) AKA ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS; 2) REZONING; 3) CONDITIONAL ZONING DISTRICTS; 4) SPECIAL USE PERMITS AND 5) ALTERNATIVE SIGN PLANS.

I WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE THESE ADDITIONAL ITEMS AT THE COUNCIL LEVEL FOR FINAL DECISION MAKING: 1) MAJOR PRELIMINARY PLAT (FORMALLY MAJOR SUBDIVISION) APPROVAL; 2) SITE PLAN APPROVAL AND 3) WRITTEN INTERPRETATION (INCLUDING DETERMINATION OF ZONING VESTED RIGHTS).

Departmental requests for staffing are discussed with every budget cycle. Are you concerned with the staffing level in any departments? Why?

YES –

1) PLANNING DEPARTMENT – WE’VE BEEN UNDERSTAFFED IN THIS DEPARTMENT FOR ABOUT A YEAR, NOT BECAUSE WE’VE NOT TRIED TO FILL THE VACANT POSITIONS, BUT BECAUSE FINDING QUALIFIED PERSONNEL TO FILL THESE VACANCIES HAS BEEN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT.

THIS CAUSES ABNORMAL DELAYS IN PROCESSING APPLICATIONS, DELAYS IN TIMELY RESPONSES TO APPLICANTS WHO HAVE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS RELATING TO THEIR PROJECTS, DELAYS IN TIMELY RESPONSES/COMMENTS FROM THE TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE TO APPLICANTS AND DELAYS IN TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA PREPARATIONS.

2) POLICE DEPARTMENT – WE ARE CLOSE TO FILLING OUR DEPARTMENTAL OPENINGS, BUT THE NATURE OF THE JOB REQUIRES VERY QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS. AND SOMETIMES A NEW INCOMING OFFICER WHO HAS GONE THROUGH A COMMUNITY COLLEGE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM OR OTHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS, AND FEELS THIS IS WHAT THEIR CHOSEN PROFESSION IS, HAS A CHANGE OF HEART WHEN THEY ARE EXPOSED TO TRUE LIFE EXPERIENCES.

EXPERIENCED OFFICERS ARE OFTEN HARD TO FIND. BUT HAVING SAID THIS WE HAVE AN EXCELLENT POLICE DEPARTMENT. AND THE PERSONNEL WE HAVE ARE TOP NOTCH. CHIEF TART HAS DONE AN EXCELLECT RECRUITING JOB SO FAR WITH EXCELLENT SUPPORT FROM OUR HUMAN RESOURCES TEAM.

The Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Clayton collaborate on several projects and programs that benefit the business community and residents of Clayton. How should the Town Council foster and support this relationship?

THIS RELATIONSHIP HAS SPAWNED MANY SUCCESSFUL FUNCTIONS THROUGH THE YEARS AND I HAVE NO REASON TO THINK THIS WILL CHANGE. THE PARTNERSHIP IS INSTRUMENTAL TO BOTH ENTITIES AND THE COLLABORATION IS VITAL FOR BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS THROUGHOUT CLAYTON.

WE CURRENTLY HAVE THE TOWN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR ON THE CHAMBER BOARD WHICH ALLOWS FOR COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN BOTH ENTITIES.

THE DIRECTOR KEEPS THE COUNCIL WELL INFORMED OF CHAMBER REQUESTS, THOUGHTS AND POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH BOTH ENTITIES. AND HE ALSO KEEPS THE CHAMBER WELL INFORMED OF COUNCIL THOUGHTS AND POTENTIAL ACTIONS THAT CAN BE BENEFICIAL TO BOTH PARTIES.