

# Carrboro candidates

## Watershed issue dominates town elections

By SANDY DIMSDALE and SUSAN KAUFFMAN  
Staff Writers

The Carrboro town elections have focused primarily on the impact of development on the University Lake watershed, but the seven candidates for the Board of Aldermen and the mayoral seats are not running one-issue campaigns.

Development beyond the watershed and the impacts of growth on town facilities are also public

concerns that elected officials will have to tackle in their upcoming terms. The candidates have studied these issues and often agree on solutions to the problems, but the proposed Amberly project has been a pivotal point in discussions.

The Amberly project is a 158-unit development proposed for 215 acres on the watershed. The impact of the development on water quality and growth has been a point of contention

since July, when the board approved construction.

Orange Water and Sewage Association (OWASA) has since imposed a two-year moratorium on development in the watershed until a water quality study is completed and analyzed.

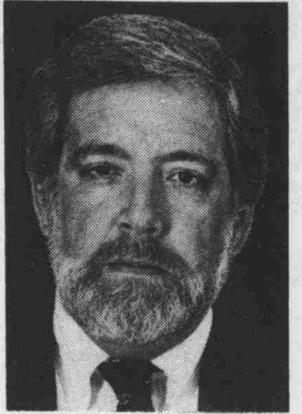
The project has also been challenged by a group of citizens and adjacent property owners who filed a lawsuit Aug. 27 against Carrboro

and Philip Szostak, the developer of the project.

Because University Lake provides water to about 55,000 people in Carrboro, Chapel Hill and parts of Orange County, watershed development has become a widespread controversial issue.

Two candidates are running for the mayoral position and five candidates are running for the three board positions in the Nov. 3 elections.

## Randy Marshall



Randy Marshall, the only incumbent alderman in the race, said he voted last spring to table the Amberly proposal until OWASA could provide objective environmental data.

Marshall said he supports balanced growth in Carrboro. "Government has to allow certain development," he said.

He said the lack of affordable housing concerns him, especially when people who work in Carrboro cannot afford to live there.

As principal of Carrboro Elementary School for the last 12 years, Marshall said he does not like the fact that many of his teachers cannot afford to live in town.

"We have two choices," he said. "We can make housing cost less or give people more money to be able to afford housing."

Marshall said he wants to consider offering city employees a monthly stipend to contribute to their house payments if they live in Carrboro. He said he believes that townspeople benefit when policemen, firemen and teachers can afford to live in their neighborhood.

Marshall advocates greater cooperation between Chapel Hill and Carrboro, possibly pooling resources

and services between the towns. He said he wants to decrease friction between the towns, but he does not support a merger.

"Carrboro is unique and we must preserve the differences between it and Chapel Hill," Marshall said.

Marshall chaired the Carrboro Year 2000 committee and was appointed by the board to fill a vacant alderman position 16 months ago.

## Mayor

### Eleanor Kinnaird



Eleanor Kinnaird, an opponent of the Amberly project, has challenged the incumbent mayor for his support of the watershed development.

"Amberly is the emergency issue of the campaign," she said. "Our water source is endangered."

Growth presents a broader problem for town officials, she said. Density, increased traffic congestion, overcrowded schools and increasing police calls are placing more pressure on public services than the town can handle, Kinnaird said.

She said she wants to clarify a local misconception that development only improves a town. "We put out a good deal more in services than we get back in taxes," she said.

Kinnaird said she would levy impact fees on developers to regulate growth and limit development to what the town infrastructure can support.

She said she also plans to consider adopting a "point system," whereby local governments can more closely evaluate design and open space proposals made by developers.

As a bicyclist who rides back and forth to work on campus, Kinnaird said she wants to improve the bike-

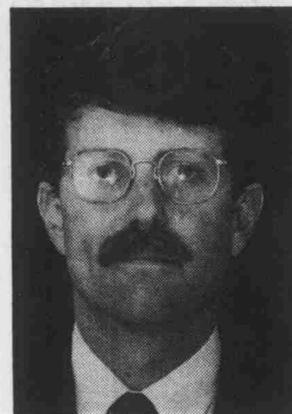
way system in Carrboro and provide more alternatives to automobile traffic.

Buses should run twice as often during the day, which would not cost the city much more than current operations, she said.

Kinnaird moved to Carrboro in 1964 and is a teaching assistant at the University music library.

## Aldermen

### Jay Bryan



Jay Bryan described the Amberly development as a density issue which evolved into a water issue. He said water quality concerns everybody, and he supports the moratorium on watershed development while OWASA completes the impact study.

If the watershed land were deemed unsuitable for development, Bryan said he would compensate the private landowners.

Bryan also champions the cause of historical preservation in Carrboro.

"The National Historic Register honored Carrboro by designating two areas in town as significant to local and national history," he said. "It is now up to our local government to preserve them officially."

Bryan supports controlled growth and has served on the Carrboro Year 2000 committee, organized to monitor town growth. He also co-founded Friends of Old Carrboro and currently serves as president of the group.

He moved to Carrboro in 1975 and is a local lawyer with a general practice.

"I liked the hard-working, community-oriented, unpretentious-

ness of the town," he said.

Bryan said his legal training would make him an asset to the board because he understands the legal technicalities concerning town government decisions.

"I would not need to rely solely on the town attorney's recommendations on legal matters," Bryan said.

### Carol Drinkard



Carol Drinkard said she supports the Amberly project as it has been proposed because she does not think the extension of water and sewer lines into the watershed would promote environmentally harmful growth. She said she opposes the use of individual septic systems in the watershed.

Drinkard said the town should deal with growth and the watershed separately. "It would be nice if we didn't have to develop the watershed, but we have to be realistic," she said.

Drinkard said she thinks local development will accompany economic growth. She stressed that slowing or stopping development will not help to lower taxes, but will stifle the town's prospects for economic growth.

She also opposes the OWASA policy of establishing the service guidelines by which developments are approved for water and sewer lines. OWASA should not have the final word on which developments get water and sewer services and which do not, Drinkard said.

Instead, she said OWASA should supply services to areas once they have been approved by local government. OWASA's policy-making capacity is "absurd," she said.

Housing and other special student needs should be a primary concern for the town because students make up about one-half of the town's population, Drinkard said.

"I've heard there's a glut of multiple-purpose housing—that rent is low and they're just giving them away," she said.

### Jim Porto



Incumbent Mayor Jim Porto, who is seeking his third term in office, said he has been incorrectly accused of not caring about the environment.

A strong supporter of controlled growth in the University Lake watershed and town development, Porto favors the extension of water and sewer lines into the watershed.

He said individual septic systems maintained privately would threaten the water supply more than the community system requested by the developer of the Amberly project. But the OWASA Board of Directors rejected the developer's request for public water and sewer lines to the project last week.

Work on the proposed Amberly project should proceed as planned, Porto said, because the developers followed the correct procedures when they applied for zoning and construction permits.

"I feel this case is a due-process issue," he said. "We can take into our own hands the making of the law, but we are obligated to uphold it."

Porto has recently pushed for board action to relieve the town's traffic problems. He said he wants to test one-way thoroughfares or redesign intersections to move cars more efficiently during peak traffic hours.

He said he plans to focus on building low-cost housing for moderate-income residents during the next two or three years, although

he believes the apartment market is saturated.

"The University is an important part of both these communities," Porto said. "We have an obligation to provide services students need, such as bus service and bikeways."

Before being elected mayor in 1983, Porto chaired the appearance commission for four years.

Porto is the business manager of a local law firm. He holds a bachelor's degree from Duke University and a master's degree in public affairs from N.C. State University, and he attended graduate school in the UNC School of Mathematics.

## Steve Oglesbee



Steve Oglesbee does not support the Amberly project because the town should not promote development at the expense of the quality and quantity of the water supply, he said.

But Oglesbee said he would not ignore the financial needs of the people who own land in the watershed. "All the municipalities involved should come up with an equitable settlement compensation for the landowners," he said.

He said he considers himself especially qualified to serve on the board and evaluate water quality issues. He has 12 years of experience in the professional field of environmental virology, where he conducted scientific studies in home waste disposal systems.

He is currently Director of the Tissue Center at the Lineberger Cancer Research Center.

Oglesbee said he is concerned about growth and development outpacing the capacity of the town's infrastructure. He said he believes part of the answer lies in assessing impact fees on developers.

"We already gained the legislative approval to assess them, but nothing has been done," Oglesbee said. "The person causing the increase in

burdens on the roads and town should pay the cost instead of the general taxpayers."

Oglesbee has dealt with traffic problems while serving as chairman of the Transportation Advisory Board. He said he is proud of the fact that Carrboro has the best bicycle system in the state and he wants to expand it.

## Frances Shetley



Frances Shetley said the watershed and traffic control are her greatest concerns for Carrboro.

She said she opposes the Amberly project as it is planned, but will wait for results from the OWASA water quality study to draw conclusions about watershed development and density of growth.

Shetley said the protection of the watershed is the most important issue of the campaign because of the potential long-range effects on the water supply.

But she also wants to relieve traffic congestion problems in Carrboro. "Right now, we have to deal with the fact that people are having trouble getting to work on time in the morning," she said.

An extensive bus service and more frequent trips to outlying areas would alleviate traffic problems, she said, and an increased bus service will help commuting University students and staff who do not own cars.

Shetley was active in deciding which items were included in Carrboro's bike referendum, but she said the town needs more bike paths.

"The more people we get on bikes and out of cars, the less congested traffic will be," she said.

On the issue of development, Shetley said the town should extend more services to existing apartment complexes before any more are built. No more apartment complexes are

needed at this time, she said. "We've got to think of what we can do for them," Shetley said. "If we let them in, we owe them something."

Shetley helped organize the Appearance Commission in 1973. Since then, she has served on and chaired the Board of Adjustment and the Transportation Advisory Board. She is also a member of the Carrboro Bike Network.

She said she is running for the board position now because she has the time available to put into causes she has supported for years.

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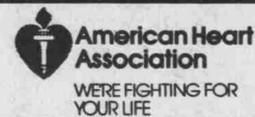
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