

CANDIDATES

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One candidate, however, scoffed at the idea of airport jobs as a panacea for poor blacks in Greensboro.

"Most people who need these jobs won't have transportation," noted Keith Bryant, who is challenging incumbent Claudette Burroughs-White for the District 2 seat she has held for the past four years.

According to Bryant, a self-employed, recent graduate of North Carolina A&T State University, city officials will have to "work on expanding bus service to the airport"; jobs there will benefit people who live in the inner city. Bryant criticized the city council for how they previously prioritized mass transportation.

Greensboro spends 15 percent of its budget on cultural recreation, but only 12 percent on transportation," Bryant said. He added, "We have all the best parks in the world, but we can't get people to work."

Bryant suggested that the city get transportation students at his alma mater to study the matter and produce a report with recommendations. He said the local government often turns to other universities for research but has overlooked A&T in this regard.

Not long ago, the city paid a consultant \$70,000 for such a study. The result was the elimination of some routes and reduction in hours of service on others. Candidate Jim Kincaid said the increase in jobs at the airport may completely alter the results of this study and he would "make arrangements to meet the present needs."

District 1 candidate John Harris said the problem is that the busses are running at the wrong time.

"They're either too late or too early for the people who need to get back and forth from work," said



Johnson

Harris, who operates a small grocery store. Every day he watches the busses go by, often with few or no passengers.

More accessible public transportation is high on Yvonne Johnson's list of priorities. Johnson, who has lived in Greensboro for 52 years and now holds an at-large seat on the city council, says she has campaigned on that issue. She echoed Bryant's suggestion that the city should have students at A&T study transportation. Some in the audience groaned, however, when Johnson said she would consider raising taxes, "as a last resort," to improve public transportation.

Current City Council members have not ignored the need for changes in public transportation, particularly out to the airport, said Don Vaughn, an at-large incumbent who has previously enjoyed strong support at the polls from black voters. Vaughn said the city just began a \$2 shuttle there.

Jobs at the airport alone won't revitalize the sluggish economy of east Greensboro, contends Bryant. He noted that in the 24 years since the city first had black representation on its council, little has been done to generate new black-owned businesses.

"Everyone keeps talking about jobs, jobs, jobs. If you can't create your own job, you won't survive in the future," Bryant said, explaining that entrepreneurship is the only real way to sustain east Greensboro. "How come we can't get people to move into a business instead of moving into a job?"

At last week's forum, candidates were also asked if they would propose or support any reallocation of funds for housing. The concern is that North Carolina's welfare



Harris

reform program, Work First, will render homeless many of those now receiving rent subsidies. Cooke

said the key will be to help people who got into homes "maintain them and get equity out of them."

Banker and one-term incumbent Keith Holliday, however, said the city cannot focus exclusively on home ownership. What's needed, he said, are "good, affordable rental units."

John Key, a candidate in District 3, said affordable housing is linked to jobs. "You have to have good jobs to afford housing," he said.

Ed Koch suggested that all affordable housing should not be placed in one area. He also said if elected he would create more opportunities for sweat equity as a means to acquiring a first home.

The discussion on affordable housing moved into a broader discussion of the black community.

Although incumbent mayor Carolyn Allen has had strong backing from black voters, at the forum she was accused of not looking out for the best interests of all neighborhoods.

"Some time ago, there was a proposal for a detention center in east Greensboro. I opposed it because of its proximity to three schools," Venable said. "The mayor didn't vote against it and I consider that a blatant disregard for the community."

To that, Allen humbly replied, "I'm not right all of the time." Burroughs-White seized the opportunity to remind voters that she "took the leadership on this" and helped residents fight the proposal.

Several candidates did not attend the forum. District 3 candidate Robbie Perkins, an incum-



Bryant

bent, did not come. Neither of the District 5 candidates, Sandy Carmany and James Faulkner, participated

in the forum. Philip Segal, who is running for the District 4 seat, was another no-show. Black voters make up about 5 percent of that district, said his opponent, Nancy

Mincello. Mincello did attend the forum, and told those in the audience that even though most of them would not have a chance to vote for or against her, if elected she would still represent them.

"Even though I would be elected from one district, I would represent the entire city," Mincello said.

Also absent from the NAACP forum was Earl Jones, whom his challenger John Harris publicly described as "the 14-year incompetent." Jones, executive director of Guilford County Community

Action, has served seven terms on the Greensboro City Council representing District 1.

The majority of Greensboro's black residents live in either District 1 or District 2. District 1 is now represented by Earl Jones, who is being challenged by John Harris. Claudette Burroughs-White represents District 2 and is being challenged by Keith Bryant. Residents in those districts will also cast ballots for at-large candidates. They include Don Vaughn, Keith Holliday and Robert Koch.

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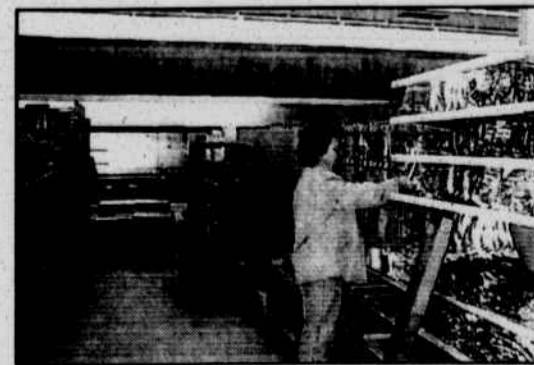
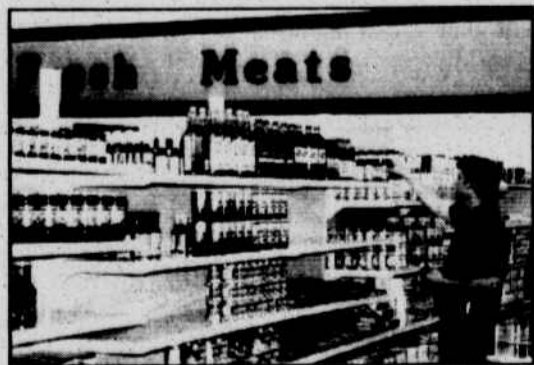
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